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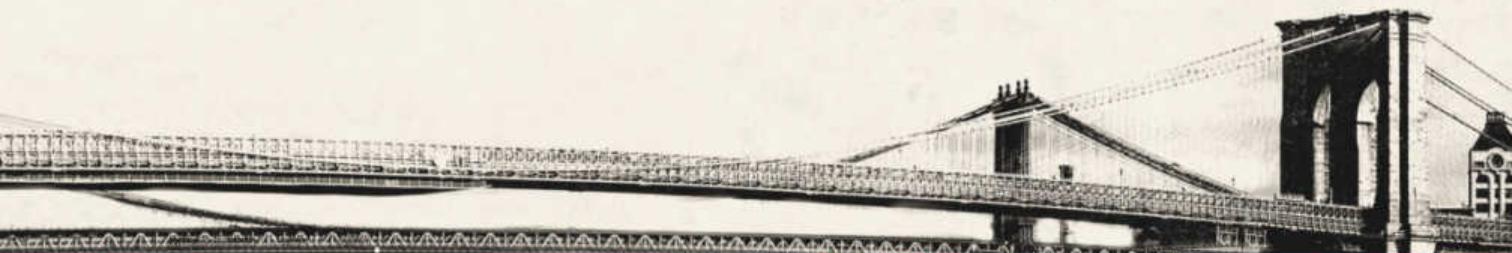


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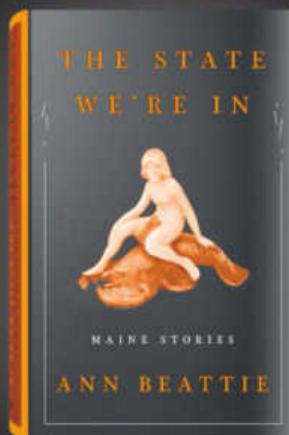
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VIDEO: The master of spice Lior Lev Sercarz creates a custom blend for the chef Ignacio Matteo's seared whole herring, at Estela. Plus, recipes from the video.

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THE MAIL

SHELTER FROM THE STORM

Kathryn Schulz's article about how the Cascadia subduction zone will trigger a catastrophic earthquake and tsunami generated attention around Puget Sound and here on the Olympic Peninsula ("The Really Big One," July 20th). She paints a harrowing picture of what will happen to our region, based on long-known scientific projections. I have been an emergency manager for forty-five years, and nothing is more troubling to me than the Cascadia scenario. Following any disaster, the county's emergency-operations center starts the relief-and-recovery process, funnelling critical supplies to the community. But, in the wake of a Cascadia event, getting the relief effort under way in our part of the state could take weeks or, possibly, months. We call that unknown length of time the "gap," when we'll be on our own, living nearly as if we were in the Stone Age. We are telling people to start preparing now: stock up on enough food, water, medicine, and other supplies to survive for three days. Then build a "gap tolerance" of ten days, and keep going. Schulz's description of the disaster is unsettling, but I hope people here in western Washington state will make some life-altering changes today, rather than wait for a quake to do it for them.

Bob Hamlin

*Director, Jefferson County Department of Emergency Management
Port Hadlock, Wash.*

Schulz provides a timely reminder that people in the Northwest live and work in an area that can experience earthquakes of magnitudes between 8.0 and 9.0. The piece describes the finding, in 1987, that recognized Cascadia as a hazard for recurring major earthquakes. Many studies followed, and there is broad scientific consensus that the Cascadia subduction zone has produced earthquakes as large as magnitude 9.0, with associated tsunamis every five hundred years, on average. There is a ten-to-fourteen-per-cent chance of a magnitude-9.0 earthquake within the next fifty years. The region has

responded. Washington and Oregon building codes incorporate estimates of ground shaking expected from a Cascadia earthquake. Tsunami evacuation maps are available for California, Oregon, and Washington. Tsunami work groups have coordinated with emergency managers, leading to an acceptance in coastal communities that the tsunami hazard implicated in the geologic record is real. In Cascadia, many bridges have been retrofitted, major electrical substations hardened, and emergency facilities upgraded to improve resilience. The Oregon legislature approved a hundred and seventy-five million dollars for seismic retrofits for schools, to make them more resilient in a Cascadia earthquake. Fortitude in the face of a Cascadia event still requires more work, but it's important to note that total destruction is not expected in Seattle or Portland, and that society can find solutions by using sound science.

*Craig Weaver, Art Frankel, and
Joan Gomberg
United States Geological Survey
Seattle, Wash.*

Statistically speaking, it's hard to say whether we're overdue for seismicity in the Pacific Northwest. I write as the author of "The Next Tsunami," which was published last year by Oregon State University Press. All we know is that we're within the window. Is an earthquake an imminent threat, or can it be left to our great-grandchildren? We should move schools that remain on the low-elevation coastal plain to high ground, and keep updating bridges—especially those on the Coast which, if they don't fall down in the quake, will save the lives of hundreds or thousands of people fleeing a tsunami. Given the absence of records of the last "big one," Schulz's article helps us take the threat seriously, despite its uncertain timing.

*Bonnie Henderson
Eugene, Ore.*

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN



AUG / SEPT 2015	WEDNESDAY 26TH	THURSDAY 27TH	FRIDAY 28TH	SATURDAY 29TH	SUNDAY 30TH	MONDAY 31ST	TUESDAY 1ST
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THE RULES OF BASEBALL, like the Constitution, change rarely but with dramatic effect. When two New York-based teams in the Vintage Base Ball Association, the Gothams and the Mutuals, compete on the parade grounds at Governors Island, on Aug. 29, they'll play according to 1864 rules. The differences from the modern game are conspicuous: fielders don't use gloves, pitchers (called "hurlers") throw underhand, batters (called "strikers") straddle a line drawn through home plate and don't take first base if they're hit by a pitch, and it takes four strikes to make an out. As in a classic Western, the rugged terms of engagement bring to life the heroic struggles and wayward charms of an earlier age.

NIGHT LIFE | DANCE
CLASSICAL MUSIC | MOVIES
THE THEATRE | ART
ABOVE & BEYOND
FOOD & DRINK



Bill Withers, who was recently inducted into the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, gets fêted at Carnegie Hall.

FALL PREVIEW

BEST KNOWN for such hits as “Lean on Me,” “Ain’t No Sunshine,” and “Use Me,” Bill Withers was one of the great soul men of the seventies. His earthy voice, straightforward songwriting, and fondness for acoustic arrangements worked the seam between R. & B. and folk, but he was also capable of deep funk, and his live performances could be incendiary—his Carnegie Hall concert, documented on a 1973 album, is a classic. Withers grew increasingly frustrated with record-label culture in the eighties, and by the end of the decade he had left the business. On Oct. 1, **D’Angelo, Ed Sheeran, Sheryl Crow**, and others pay tribute to him, fittingly, at Carnegie Hall. The man himself will be on hand, but the specifics of his participation are a closely guarded secret.

The four surviving members of the **Zombies**, with help from other artists, are touring the U.S. for the first time since 1965. The group produced the classic-rock staples “She’s Not There,” which hit No. 1 in 1964, and “Time of the Season,” which charted in 1969, after they had broken up, thanks in part to a d.j. from Boise, Idaho, who became obsessed with the song. “Time of the Season” was the closing track on their second album, “Odessey and Oracle” (1968), an astonishing, elegant collection, marked by intricate vocal harmonies and songwriting craftsmanship that rivalled “St. Pepper’s.” The album was a commercial failure but an artistic triumph, and they’ve never played it in the States, until now: they are at the New York Society for Ethical Culture on Oct. 9.

Two years ago, BRIC, the nonprofit organization that puts on the summer concert series *Celebrate Brooklyn!*, converted the historic 1919 Strand Theatre, in the heart of the borough, into its new home, the BRIC House. From Oct. 11–16, the organization inaugurates an annual jazz festival, bringing up-and-coming local artists together with such established performers as **Ron Carter, Kamasi Washington, Dr. Lonnie Smith’s Evolution, the Nicholas Payton Trio, and Kris Bowers**.

—John Donohue

ROCK AND POP

Musicians and night-club proprietors lead complicated lives; it’s advisable to check in advance to confirm engagements.

Alessia Cara

The nineteen-year-old singer-songwriter decided to take a gap year between high school and college to focus on her musical career. It’s a risky move, but after listening to “Here,” her sultry, soulful R. & B. anthem that depicts an antisocial teen-ager feeling out of place at a party, it’s clear that Cara made the right choice. The Brampton, Ontario, native has been posting covers to YouTube for years, but it was her raw, beautiful version of the Neighbourhood’s “Sweater Weather” that caught the ear of the music manager Tony Perez, who flew her to New York for a showcase. Cara then teamed up with Sebastian Kole, the co-writer of “Here,” and eventually signed with Def Jam Recordings, which will release her début album, “Know-It-All,” later this year. See her at the relatively intimate Bowery Ballroom before she graduates to bigger venues. (6 Delancey St. 212-533-2111. Aug. 26.)

Darwin Deez

The thirty-one-year-old songwriter Darwin Smith, who performs and records under this name, has a recognizable look that matches his unmistakable musical style. Lanky, mustachioed, and often wearing a headband wrapped around his curly locks, Smith plays clever pop with everything-but-the-kitchen-sink-style flair. He’s at Baby’s All Right with material from his forthcoming third album, “Double Down.” His new songs are smooth, with blues and jazz chord structures supporting Smith’s angelic vocals. The bluesy, flights-of-fancy guitar solos from his last album have been toned down, but make no mistake: there is plenty of intricately woven electric-guitar work. As the title suggests, he appears to have doubled down, at least in the departments of melody and funk-empowered grooves. With **Strange Names**, a fun local trio by way of Minneapolis that plays dance pop with an eighties sheen. (146 Broadway, Brooklyn. 718-599-5800. Aug. 26.)

Earth with Marc Ribot and Ikue Mori

Though founded in Olympia, Washington, in 1989, at the height of grunge’s ascendancy, by the guitarist Dylan Carlson (whose best friend was Kurt Cobain), Earth, now based in Seattle, has always maintained a musical vision outside the mainstream. Combining Black Sabbath-tinged riffs with long-sustaining drones in the fashion of the minimalist composer La Monte Young, Carlson created a new subgenre called drone metal. He went on to occasionally add country and jazz elements to his music, but the instrumental power trio’s most recent album, “Primitive and Deadly,” is a return to a more orthodox version of their sound. Highlights include unbelievably slow tempos and intricate song structures, which build to an understated grandeur. In an inspired choice for a double bill, the downtown guitar master **Marc Ribot** and the electronica pioneer **Ikue Mori** will perform mostly improvised scores to several short films by the director Jennifer Reeves, including “Shadows Choose Their Horrors,” a campy, experimental work inspired by “Nosferatu” and Aaron Copland’s ballet “Grohg.” (Le Poisson Rouge, 158 Bleecker St. 212-505-3474. Aug. 26.)

Houndstooth

The singer Katie Bernstein and the guitarist John Gnorski, the primary musicians in this act from Portland, Oregon, both hail from Austin, which

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may account for the bluesy, country feel of their songs. But there are plenty of other elements at play in their music, too, such as dream pop, psych rock, punk, and even krautrock. This may seem like a fairly hectic list of influences, but the parts come together gorgeously on the band's second album, "No News from Home," a melodic work of dolorous storytelling made all the more evocative by Bernstein's slightly flat, strangely seductive voice. (Rough Trade NYC, 64 N. 9th St., Brooklyn. roughtradeny.com. Aug. 29.)

JAZZ AND STANDARDS

Kenny Barron and Ray Drummond

The gold-chip pianist Barron and the bassist Drummond share a deep history that stretches back to the seventies. With such seasoned stylists as these, a silken textural weave and second-sight interplay is a given. (Mezzrow, 163 W. 10th St. mezzrow.com. Aug. 28-29.)

Gerald Clayton Quintet

While there are certainly more daringly original pianists on the scene, Clayton has an unapologetic vivacity that's hard to resist. Trios were once his ensemble of choice, but Clayton is now thinking like a commanding small-group leader: his sharp quintet includes the saxophonists **Ben Wendel** and **Logan Richardson**. (Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. 212-255-4037. Aug. 25-30.)

Ethan Iverson and Tom Harrell

Iverson, the pianist with the Bad Plus, not only respects his elders (peruse his acclaimed blog, Do the Math), he grabs whatever opportunities he can to play with them. At Mezzrow, he mixes it up with Harrell, a revered post-bop trumpeter. (163 W. 10th St. mezzrow.com. Aug. 25-26.)

Cécile McLorin Salvant

Jazz-vocal stardom may be within her grasp, but McLorin Salvant is going to take hold of it her own way. Her fine new album, "For One to Love," the follow-up to her lauded 2013 debut recording, "WomanChild," positions five well-crafted originals among an intriguing blend of standards. Listeners craving the comfort of the tried and true should look elsewhere. She's at the Jazz Standard, backed by the pianist **Aaron Dieh**, the bassist **Paul Sikivie**, and the drummer **Lawrence Leathers**. (116 E. 27th St. 212-576-2232. Aug. 25-29.)

Charlie Parker Birthday Celebration

The bebop avatar, who died in 1955, just a few months before his thirty-fifth birthday, would be ninety-five years old on August 29th. Having changed the face of jazz forever, Parker is paid tribute nearly every time a contemporary jazz musician hits a bandstand. This devoted celebration features a particularly strong intergenerational ensemble, with the saxophonists **Greg Osby** and **Vincent Herring**, the trumpeter **Jeremy Pelt**, the pianist **Don Friedman**, and the drummer **Victor Lewis**. (Birdland, 315 W. 44th St. 212-581-3080. Aug. 25-29.)

Kenny Werner New Quintet

A sparkling modern pianist and a committed composer, Werner has no aversion to sharing the spotlight with handpicked compatriots. The latest iteration of his band is an A-list affair, with such players as the trumpeter **Ambrose Akinmusire**, the saxophonist **Chris Potter**, the bassist **John Patitucci**, and the drummer **Marcus Gilmore**. (Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St. 212-475-8592. Aug. 26-30.)

DANCE



American Ballet Theatre performs Frederick Ashton's "Monotones I" and "Monotones II."

FALL PREVIEW

AS OKWUI OKPOKwasili's ONE-WOMAN SHOW "Bronx Gothic" (Oct. 21-24, at New York Live Arts) begins, the actress-dancer faces away from the audience, her back rippling, swaying, heaving. Then she begins to speak: "I want to share something with you—a note passed between two girls at the tender age of eleven, one of which was me." What follows feels almost like a séance, voices returning from a deep, hidden place. Friendship, trust, aggression, sex—lots of sex—spill over, still white hot. Every so often, Okpokwasili breaks into a spasm-filled dance or a sweet melody. It's not always easy to follow the dreamlike logic of her thoughts, but Okpokwasili, who has worked with Ralph Lemon and Julie Taymor, makes it impossible to look away.

Mark Morris returns to **American Ballet Theatre** (Oct. 21-Nov. 1, David H. Koch Theatre) for the first time in more than a decade, with a new dance for the company. The piece is set to a septet by Johann Nepomuk Hummel, a little-known early-Romantic composer, whose jaunty spirit and transparent orchestrations are well matched to Morris's structural and musical wit. The company will also perform—for the first time—Frederick Ashton's "Monotones I" and "Monotones II," from 1965 and 1966. Inspired in part by the space discoveries of the sixties, the two trios suggest a kind of cosmic calm, as impassive and even-paced as the Satie pieces to which they are set.

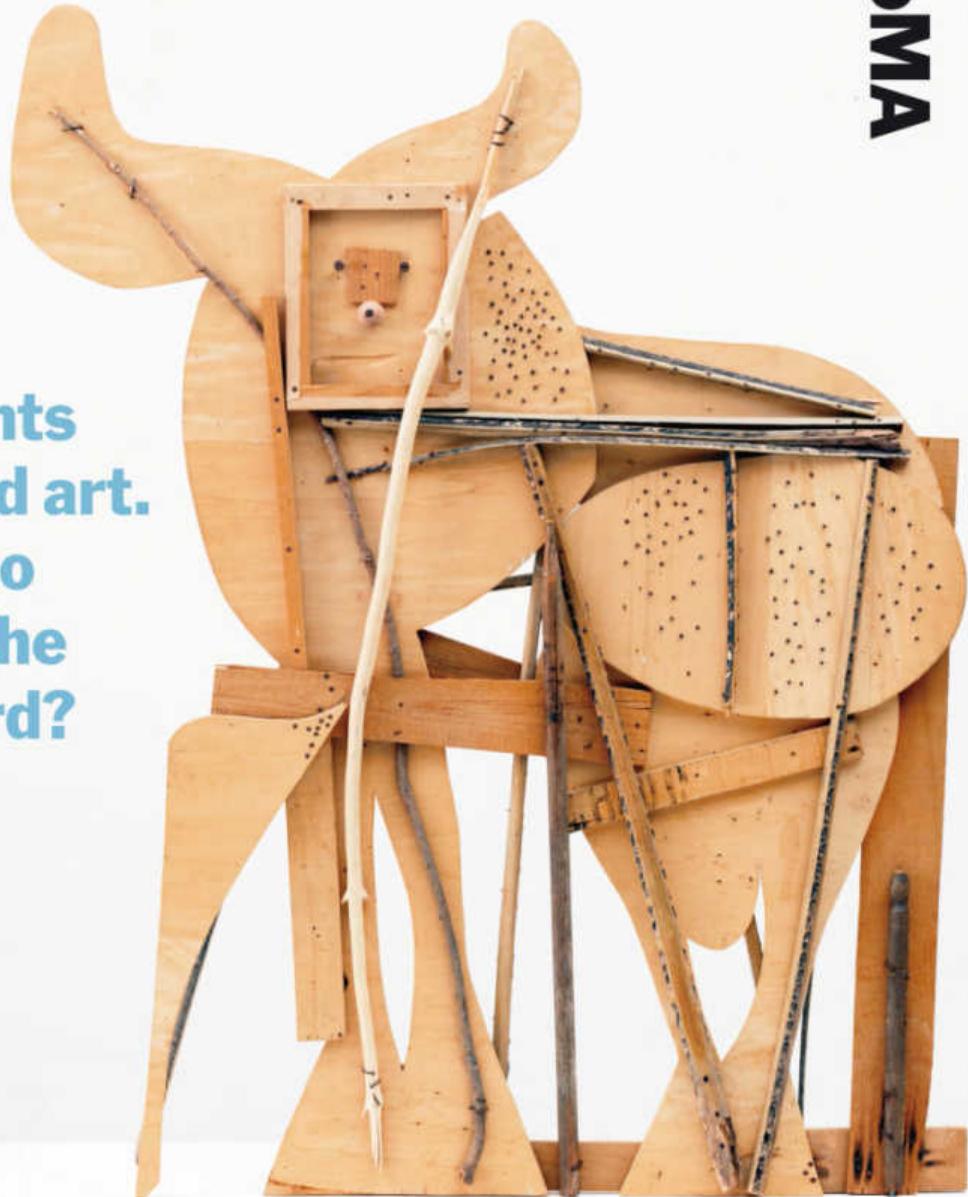
What's the best way to celebrate fifty years of making dances? If you're **Twyla Tharp**, the answer is to make more dances. At the end of a cross-country victory lap, Tharp marches into the Koch Theatre (under the auspices of the Joyce, Nov. 17-22) with twelve dancers. The choreographer—whose works include "Push Comes to Shove," which combines ballet with vaudeville and ragtime, and "In the Upper Room," which takes the athleticism of dance to exhilarating heights—returns with two new works: one set to Bach, the other to jazz.

—Marina Harss

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Pablo Picasso. *Bull*. 1958. Blockboard (wood base panel), palm frond and various other tree branches, eyebolt, nails, and screws, with drips of alkyd and pencil markings. The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Jacqueline Picasso in honor of the Museum's continuous commitment to Pablo Picasso's art. © 2015 Estate of Pablo Picasso/Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York

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Bailey Nolan / "Dumbo"

Though a frequent colleague of the rough provocateur Ann Liv Young, Nolan seems to have a softer touch. Her gender-politics update of "Dumbo" is told from the perspective of the big-eared elephant's mother, played by Nolan as a retired showgirl. Members of Nolan's cultish, self-satirizing performance collective BabySkinGlove fill out the fairly large cast, performing to pop tracks in an attempt to reveal the Dumbo inside us all. (JACK, 505 1/2 Waverly Ave., Brooklyn. jackny.org. Aug. 27-29.)

"Pearl"

The life of Pearl S. Buck—who was raised by missionaries in China, wrote the hugely popular didactic novel "The Good Earth," and won the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1938—seems an unlikely subject for a dance-theatre work. That it is directed and choreographed by Daniel Ezralow, a veteran purveyor of kitsch, doesn't inspire any more confidence. The only hope for the production, which brings together Chinese and North American performers, might be as a large-scale spectacle: a river snakes across the stage in the shape of the Yangtze. (David H. Koch, Lincoln Center. 212-721-6500. Aug. 27-30.)

Laura Peterson Choreography / Nichole Canuso

For her part of a shared program, Peterson presents "Atomic Orbital," which arranges an ensemble of dancers as if they were in an electron-probability field, spinning and colliding at high speeds. "Midway Avenue" is a solo by the Philadelphia-based Canuso. With some masking tape, chalk, and few other props, she recreates her childhood home, using spoken text and movement to elucidate the construction of memories. (HERE, 145 Sixth Ave., near Spring St. 212-352-3101. Aug. 27-30.)

OUT OF TOWN

Jacob's Pillow Dance Festival

The Martha Graham Dance Company (Ted Shawn) kicks off its ninetieth-anniversary season with a quadruple bill. The evening's single work by the group's founder, "Embattled Garden," is a retelling of the story of Adam and Eve, in which Graham's angular choreography is abetted by a spindly, treacherous-looking set by Isamu Noguchi. In addition to two dark, expressionistic works by Andonis Foniadakis and Nacho Duato, the dancers try their hand at an adaptation of the recently premiered "AXE," by the Swedish choreographer Mats Ek. In Ek's characteristically homespun manner, the piece details the love and longings of a swarthy woodsman and his female companion. • The extraordinary young dancers of the all-male ensemble MADBOOTS DANCE (Doris Duke) present two works exploring aspects of the young male experience: loneliness, bonding, the lure of suicide, and the ecstatic release of movement. (Becket, Mass. 413-243-0745. Aug. 26-30.)

CLASSICAL MUSIC



The pianist Evgeny Kissin performs the same program on two successive nights at Carnegie Hall.

FALL PREVIEW

THERE IS HARDLY A GREAT pianist in the world who has not beaten a path to the door of Carnegie Hall. But none of them—not even Vladimir Horowitz—has ever done what the Russian phenom **Evgeny Kissin** will accomplish this fall: give the exact same program (sonatas by Mozart and Beethoven, miniatures by Albéniz and Brahms) on two successive evenings (Nov. 3 and Nov. 6). **Simon Rattle**, a major change agent at the Berlin Philharmonic, hews to tradition, pacing his orchestra through the symphonies of Beethoven (Nov. 17-21). The violinist **Leila Josefowicz**, her career almost exclusively devoted to new music, includes Schumann's Sonata No. 1 in A Minor for Violin and Piano, as well as works by Falla and Messiaen, in a recital that highlights more recent music by John Adams and Erkki-Sven Tüür (Nov. 10). **Alan Gilbert**, another gifted advocate, conducts a world première from Magnus Lindberg—one of a raft of works commissioned in celebration of Carnegie's hundred-and-twenty-fifth anniversary—in the opening-night concert with the New York Philharmonic, with Kissin on hand as soloist in Tchaikovsky's First Piano Concerto (Oct. 7).

Autumn at the Metropolitan Opera begins with Bartlett Sher's new production of "**Otello**" (featuring Aleksandrs Antonenko in the title role, on Sept. 21), led by the energetic Yannick Nézet-Séguin, and William Kentridge's hotly anticipated staging of "**Lulu**" (with Marlis Petersen, beginning Nov. 5), conducted—fingers crossed—by the more weathered James Levine. The soprano Christine Brewer teams up with the organist Paul Jacobs in a recital of sacred music (Nov. 1) that is part of Lincoln Center's **White Light Festival**, a series notable for evenings of dance set to music by Bach (with Anne Teresa De Keersmaeker, on Oct. 29-30) and Thomas Adès (in a production by London's Sadler's Wells company, on Nov. 20-22). More quietly innovative is the pianist **Anthony de Mare**, performing new music inspired by the standards of Stephen Sondheim, at Birdland, the Sheen Center, and Symphony Space (Sept. 24, Oct. 22, and Nov. 19).

—Russell Platt



KEIRA KNIGHTLEY
GABRIEL EBERT MATT RYAN
AND
JUDITH LIGHT

THÉRÈSE RAQUIN

BY HELEN EDMUNDSON
BASED UPON THE NOVEL BY ÉMILE ZOLA

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CONCERTS IN TOWN

Brooklyn Raga Massive All Stars: "In C"

The members of this Kings County collective devoted to Indian classical music, leaders of the Raga renaissance currently underway, intend to reclaim Terry Riley's India-inspired opus—to many, the foundation stone of minimalism—incorporating their own improvisation and embellishment to create an East-West psychedelic reenvisioning of the epoch-making work. (Rubin Museum of Art, 150 W. 17th St. rubinmuseum.org. Aug. 28 at 7.)

LoftOpera

The itinerant company, which repurposes warehouse spaces across the city, stages a double bill of two large-scale song cycles, Berlioz's "Les Nuits d'Été" and Mahler's "Lieder eines Fahrenden Gesellen," at the Muse, a circus school in Bushwick. It's a fitting choice for a company that creates intimacy out of vastness, since the cycles—each by a composer deeply familiar with the operatic realm—yearn for a dramatic frame beyond the bounds of the genre. Dean Buck conducts the mezzo-soprano Rebecca Ringle and the baritone Joel Herold in John de los Santos's production. (350 Moffat St., Brooklyn. loftopera.com. Aug. 28-29 at 9; doors open at 8.)

Metropolitan Opera Summer HD Festival

To whet the public appetite for the season to come, the Met presents its annual round of summer screenings of operatic performances from the company's burgeoning library of HD broadcasts. The free series, which runs through Sept. 7, begins with a bit of nostalgia—a showing of the movie version of "West Side Story," with Natalie Wood, Rita Moreno, and the electric choreography of Jerome Robbins—and continues with presentations of "Carmen," "Macbeth," "Les Contes d'Hoffmann," and the double bill of "Iolanta" and "Bluebeard's Castle"; the stars include Anna Netrebko, Vittorio Grigolo, Nadja Michael, and René Pape. (Lincoln Center Plaza. Aug. 28 and Aug. 30 at 8, Aug. 29 and Aug. 31 at 7:45, and Sept. 1 at 7:30. No tickets required.)

OUT OF TOWN

Maverick Concerts

The weekend at the Maverick's serene woodland hall begins in feisty fashion, with a duo-piano concert by Frederic Chiu and Andrew Russo that ranges from the salon delicacy of music by Schubert and Griffes to the atavistic energy of Prokofiev and Stravinsky (the composer's four-hand version of "The Rite of Spring"). The Sunday-afternoon concert is a showcase for the Old World elegance of Boston's Borromeo String Quartet, who probe the expressive worlds of Haydn, Beethoven (the Quartet in A Minor, Op. 132), and a Boston legend, the late Gunther Schuller (the Quartet No. 4, from 2002). (Woodstock, N.Y. maverickconcerts.org. Aug. 29 at 8 and Aug. 30 at 4.)

Music Mountain

Few young American ensembles are as exciting and accomplished as the Dover Quartet, who bring their impeccable style to northwestern Connecticut's chamber-music shrine in masterworks by Dutilleux ("Thus the Night"), Dvořák (the String Quartet in F Major, "American"), and Mozart (the dulcet Clarinet Quintet, with Alexander Fiterstein). (Falls Village, Conn. 860-824-7126. Aug. 30 at 3.)

X MOVIES



Rooney Mara and Cate Blanchett play lovers defying persecution in Todd Haynes's "Carol."

FALL PREVIEW

AS THE YEAR'S PRESTIGIOUS RELEASES roll in with an eye toward Oscar season, historical reconstructions—whether based on true stories or on classic fiction—will dominate screens. **"Carol"** (opening Nov. 20), directed by Todd Haynes, is set in 1952 New York. Rooney Mara plays a sales clerk who falls in love with a married woman (Cate Blanchett). It's based on a novel, "The Price of Salt," that Patricia Highsmith originally published under a pseudonym. **"Black Mass"** (Sept. 18) is a bio-pic about the Boston mobster Whitey Bulger (Johnny Depp), who, in the nineteen-seventies, became an informant for the F.B.I. Scott Cooper directed; Dakota Johnson co-stars.

"Pawn Sacrifice" (Sept. 18), directed by Edward Zwick, depicts the Cold War machinations behind the 1972 world-championship chess match between Brooklyn's own Bobby Fischer (played by Tobey Maguire) and the reigning champion at the time, Boris Spassky (Liev Schreiber), of the Soviet Union. Steven Spielberg's **"Bridge of Spies"** (Oct. 16), based on the so-called U-2 incident of 1960, tells the story of secret efforts to free the American pilot Francis Gary Powers from Soviet captivity. Tom Hanks plays James B. Donovan, the attorney who negotiated for his release; Amy Ryan plays the attorney's wife, Mary McKenna Donovan; and Austin Stowell plays Powers.

"Brooklyn" (Nov. 6), directed by John Crowley and adapted by Nick Hornby from a novel by Colm Tóibín, stars Saoirse Ronan as an Irish immigrant in New York in the nineteen-fifties. Michael Almereyda directed **"Experimenter"** (Oct. 16), a dramatization of a 1961 psychology experiment by Stanley Milgram (played by Peter Sarsgaard), in which subjects were induced to administer electric shocks to a designated victim. Angelina Jolie directed, wrote, and stars in **"By the Sea"** (Nov. 13), a drama set in France in the nineteen-seventies, about a couple—a retired dancer, played by Jolie, and a blocked writer, played by Brad Pitt—who are struggling to save their marriage.

—Richard Brody

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NOW PLAYING

Alice in the Cities

In Wim Wenders's 1974 drama, Rüdiger Vogler plays the director's alter ego, Philip Winter, a thirtysomething German journalist on the road in the United States. Taking Polaroids instead of writing a story, Philip loses his job and must go home. But first, in New York, he's thrown together with Alice van Damm (Yella Rottländer), a nine-year-old German girl abandoned by her mother (Lisa Kreuzer), and takes her on an odyssey from Manhattan to Amsterdam and a series of German towns. With this film, Wenders crystallized his style of existential sentimentality. His cool eye for urbanism and design blends a love of kitsch with a hatred for commercialism, historicism with a fear of history's ghosts. Wenders's New York chapter is a loving time capsule featuring the Rockaway Beach boardwalk and the organist at Shea Stadium; his German towns blend grim industry and grubby necessity. The movie runs on American dreams; a jukebox playing Canned Heat, a Chuck Berry concert, and even John Ford's obituary lend a touch of life to Wenders's gray continent. In German and English.—Richard Brody (IFC Center; Aug. 28–Sept. 3.)

American Ultra

The director Nima Nourizadeh's twisty, craftily violent, swoonily romantic young-adult action thriller is about a slacker couple who are less slack than they first seem. Mike (Jesse Eisenberg) and Phoebe (Kristen Stewart) live in a ramshackle house in rural West Virginia. He's an aspiring graphic novelist; she helps him through his panic attacks. But Mike—unbeknownst to himself—is the survivor of a failed C.I.A. experiment that turned him into a superhuman killing machine, and when agency operatives arrive to dispose of him his skills kick into full gear, surprising himself and his handlers alike, and drawing Phoebe into the fray. Nourizadeh, working with a script by Max Landis, plays Mike's bloody violence like visual guitar riffs, and approaches the martial-arts set pieces with heavily underlined wit. The pathos of hidden identities doesn't arise until near the end; Eisenberg and Stewart handle the action with aplomb but have little room for emotional maneuvering. Despite the spy-centered paranoia, the film's deepest backstory involves the cruel absurdity of drug laws.—R.B. (In wide release.)

Digging for Fire

A happy couple's submerged tensions come to the surface in Joe Swanberg's tender, wildly imaginative comic drama. Tim (Jake Johnson), a public-school teacher; Lee (Rosemary DeWitt), a yoga instructor; and their toddler son, Jude (Jude Swanberg, the director's son), take a staycation in

a luxurious house belonging to one of her clients. Scratching around on the hilly property, Tim unearths a gun and a human bone, and wants to dig further. Lee brings Jude to her mother's house and plans a night on the town with a friend (Melanie Lynskey), leaving Tim to plow through a pile of receipts and do their taxes. Instead, Tim invites some guys over, and they bring some girls, and everyone gets in on the excavation. The exuberantly crisscrossing story (co-written by Swanberg and Johnson), involving drugs, alcohol, fights, and flirtations, captures the mixed emotions of marriage and parenthood, with conflicts between love and frustration, devotion and constraint, threatening to tear apart a well-matched pair. Refreshing life by considering death, renewing romance in the face of violence, Swanberg offers symbolic nods to the land of film noir.—R.B. (In limited release.)

The Man from U.N.C.L.E.

Another old television show is put through the remake mill. The unlucky candidate, this time, is the light and frolicsome spy drama that ran from 1964 to 1968 and starred Robert Vaughn and David McCallum. (It was clearly an elixir, too, since both men are still hard at work.) Their respective roles, of Napoleon Solo and Illya Kuryakin, now pass to Henry Cavill and Armie Hammer, neither of whom looks a fraction as comfortable as his predecessor. Indeed, the whole production, directed by Guy Ritchie, feels tense and unrelaxed, desperately stacking up the period details—for we are still in the lap of the nineteen-sixties—while falling far short of the suavity that is required. The plot ferries our heroes from a shadowy chase in Berlin (the best thing in the film) to the gloss of Roman high society, thus turning Cold War enemies into uneasy chums. Caught between them is a young German named Gaby—played by Alicia Vikander, who is laden with dresses and gewgaws yet denuded of any chance to shine. With Hugh Grant, who dons a pair of shades not to fend off the sun but as if hoping to sidle through the whole thing incognito.—Anthony Lane (Reviewed in our issue of 8/24/15.) (In wide release.)

The Marquise of O

The exquisite, watch-like logic of Eric Rohmer's direction contrasts with the wild unreason of the 1808 story by Kleist that he adapts in this perversely ironic costume drama, from 1976. It is, grotesquely, a story of rape that's told as a fairy tale without diminishing its horror. During the Napoleonic Wars, as Russian forces overwhelm Austrian troops in Italy, several Russian soldiers assault Julietta (Edith Clever), the widowed daughter of an Austrian colonel, but a Russian officer, Count F. (Bruno

Ganz), rescues her. Back home, the grateful Julietta is given a sedative by her maid. When the Count finds Julietta unconscious, he rapes her; soon thereafter, he departs for the front. Upon his return, he proposes to marry her; Julietta, pregnant but unaware of having had sex, turns him down, and places a newspaper ad to seek the father of her unborn child. The sordid tale sounds like a dirty joke, but Rohmer treats it as a study in crime and redemption, faith and love. He depicts the theoretical extreme of evil that may coexist with exceptional virtue; his vibrant actors mask the movie's inhuman abstractions. In German.—R.B. (BAM Cinématheque; Aug. 28–Sept. 3.)

The Mend

This grinding, pathos-laden melodrama, directed by John Magary, turns cruel and capricious behavior among aging and troubled bohemians into a springboard for showy displays of actorly chops. Josh Lucas stars as Mat, a bearded, big-time lover endowed with massive irresponsibility. Thrown out by his girlfriend, Andrea (Lucy Owen), he crashes a party at the apartment of his brother, Alan (Stephen Plunkett), and Alan's girlfriend, Farrah (Mickey Sumner). When Farrah and Alan leave the next morning, Mat stays and invites Andrea and her young son, Ronnie (Cory Nichols), to move in with him there; when Alan returns, a bruising reunion results. Broken love joins with broken glass as festering resentments and romantic wrangles yield yelps of pain and desire. Magary's ambition overwhelms his insight; he dourly delights in the mess that the characters make of their lives but lends them little fantasy or psychological resonance. Despite the willful worldliness of the high-stakes emotional games, the movie's downbeat street poetry devolves into moody clichés. With Austin Pendleton, as the brothers' flamboyantly life-worn uncle.—R.B. (In limited release.)

Mistress America

The new Noah Baumbach movie—arriving hot on the heels of the last one, "While We're Young"—is about Tracy (Lola Kirke), a freshman at Barnard, and her fragile friendship with Brooke (Greta Gerwig), twelve years her senior. They are linked though not yet related, since Tracy's mother is betrothed to Brooke's father. Brooke does a heap of things, none of which endures; she runs an exercise class, she plans to open a restaurant, and her eagerness both captivates and vexes the younger woman, who seems wiser and more guarded, and who doesn't scruple to write a story based on the figure of Brooke, much to the latter's distress. Baumbach, as a student of screwball, knows how the lunges of action, in pursuit of love or money, can veer toward a kind of

madness, yet he also displays great coolness and care throughout the second half of the film, as he stages an elaborate set piece inside a fancy house in Connecticut—introducing one fresh character after another, without cluttering the frame or letting the energy drop. That is why some of the sharpest contributions come from supporting players: Michael Chernus, as Brooke's former beau, now chunky and rich; Matthew Shear, as a classmate of Tracy's; and Jasmine Cephas Jones, as his seething girlfriend.—A.L. (8/24/15) (In limited release.)

Straight Outta Compton

This bio-pic, about the rise, breakup, and legacy of the Los Angeles hip-hop group N.W.A., gets beyond the glamorous surface of fame to reveal the machinations that brought the ensemble together in the nineteen-eighties, and soon drove it apart. The movie also highlights, with just outrage, the abuses inflicted by the police against blacks—and, in particular, on N.W.A.'s members—that gave rise to the famous song "Fuck tha Police." The director, F. Gary Gray, emphasizes the hit's importance by filming a contested performance of it in Detroit as a bravura showpiece. The remarkable cast—headed by Corey Hawkins, as the musical mastermind Dr. Dre; O'Shea Jackson, Jr., as the ingenious lyricist Ice Cube (who is also Jackson's real-life father); and Jason Mitchell, as Eazy-E, the entrepreneurial drug dealer who financed the group's record label and starred on its first hit—maintains an energized, conversational rapidity. But the personal lives of the musicians are mere backdrop. The core of the story is business, the object is power, and the quirks of desire and twists of the unconscious are given no place in the struggle—which the movie sharply carries ahead to the present day.—R.B. (In wide release.)

Under Capricorn

Alfred Hitchcock's sumptuous romantic melodrama, from 1949—set in Sydney, Australia, in 1831—explores lurid new byways of Hitchcock's familiar obsessions. The intrigue begins when Charles Adare (Michael Wilding), a suave Irish ne'er-do-well, disembarks there and is befriended by the rough-hewn but wealthy Sam Flusky (Joseph Cotten), a self-made "emancipist," or freed convict. Sam's wife, Henrietta (Ingrid Bergman), is a Victorian-era madwoman in seclusion and under the thumb of a domineering housemaid (Margaret Leighton) with designs on Sam. Hitchcock's darting, swooping camera seems borrowed from Max Ophüls, but the theme of erotic degradation is entirely his own. He draws a crucial line between love and lust and, in a brilliant scene of mirrors and darkness, evokes the perilous loss of self that sexual passion entails.—R.B. (MOMA; Aug. 30.)

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THE THEATRE



Clive Owen, Bruce Willis, and Keira Knightley make their Broadway débuts.

FALL PREVIEW

MOVIE STARS CRASH-LANDING ON BROADWAY seems de rigueur, but last season “*Fun Home*” and “*The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time*” led the pack without famous names. This fall, star vehicles are back, with a trio of celebrities making Broadway débuts. Clive Owen headlines the Roundabout’s production of “**Old Times**,” Harold Pinter’s enigmatic drama from 1971, opposite Eve Best (previews begin Sept. 17, at the American Airlines Theatre). At Studio 54, Keira Knightley is the haunted heroine of “**Thérèse Raquin**,” Helen Edmundson’s adaptation of the Émile Zola novel (Oct. 1). And, at the Broadhurst, Bruce Willis plays a writer with an overeager fan in “**Misery**,” based on the Stephen King book and William Goldman’s screenplay for the 1990 movie, with Laurie Metcalf in the role made famous by Kathy Bates (Oct. 22). Meanwhile, Al Pacino, a more frequent visitor to the stage, stars in David Mamet’s “**China Doll**,” at the Schoenfeld, as a guy with a big fortune and a young fiancée (Oct. 21).

Elsewhere, Broadway’s homegrown talents find vehicles of their own. Nina Arianda stars in Sam Shepard’s “**Fool for Love**,” opposite Sam Rockwell (at the Samuel J. Friedman, Sept. 15). Annaleigh Ashford, who won a Tony last season, for “*You Can’t Take It with You*,” plays the title canine in A. R. Gurney’s “**Sylvia**” (at the Cort, Oct. 2).

Oct. 17 marks the centennial of Arthur Miller, so attention must be paid. At the Signature, Michael Wilson directs the war drama “**Incident at Vichy**,” from 1964 (Oct. 27). The Belgian stage auteur Ivo van Hove brings his acclaimed production of “**A View from the Bridge**,” set on the Red Hook docks, from London to the Lyceum (Oct. 21). If Miller is too square for your tastes, van Hove has something far more extraterrestrial planned downtown: “**Lazarus**,” a musical adaptation of Walter Tevis’s novel “*The Man Who Fell to Earth*,” starring Michael C. Hall (at New York Theatre Workshop, Nov. 18), with songs by a real live space oddity, David Bowie, who starred in the 1976 film version.

—Michael Schulman

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

The Christians

In Lucas Hnath’s play, directed by Les Waters, the pastor at a megachurch plans to give a sermon that will unsettle his congregation. Previews begin Aug. 28. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

A Delicate Ship

Margot Bordelon directs Anna Ziegler’s play, in which a couple’s contented Christmas Eve is disrupted by the woman’s childhood friend. In previews. Opens Aug. 27. (Peter Jay Sharp, 416 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)

Hamlet in Bed

Michael Laurence wrote and stars in this play, about an adopted actor rehearsing for “*Hamlet*” who casts his possible birth mother as Gertrude. Lisa Peterson directs. Previews begin Aug. 28. (Rattlestick, 224 Waverly Pl. 866-811-4111.)

The Legend of Georgia McBride

MCC begins its season with a comedy by Matthew Lopez, directed by Mike Donahue, about an Elvis impersonator at a Florida dive bar who loses his spot to a drag show. In previews. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 212-352-3101.)

The New Morality

In Jonathan Bank’s revival of the Harold Chapin comedy, first produced in 1920, a woman on a houseboat on the Thames watches as her husband flirts with a neighbor. In previews. (Mint, 311 W. 43rd St. 866-811-4111.)

Whorl Inside a Loop

Sherie Rene Scott stars in a play she wrote with Dick Scanlan, about an actress teaching a storytelling class in a maximum-security prison. Scanlan and Michael Mayer direct. In previews. Opens Aug. 27. (Second Stage, 305 W. 43rd St. 212-246-4422.)

NOW PLAYING

Come Back Up

If you’re unlucky enough to find yourself watching this misbegotten new play by Sarah M. Duncan, seeing will be believing. Otherwise, you may have trouble crediting the existence of a narrative so risibly bizarre. On an unwanted visit to her ex-girlfriend’s house, Clara discovers that her disabled son may have caused the deaths of two girls. Let’s call his unspecified condition Icarus syndrome: he was field-testing some wings he built for the earthbound soul of his dead sister, Hattie, who’s waiting for a delayed flight to heaven. Between paranormal revelations, Clara and her ex, Letta, argue mawkishly about various things, including systemic racism (Letta and her children are black). The addled social critique sits uneasily amid the supernatural flimflam; Duncan seems not to have written the play so much as been dragged helplessly behind its careening plot. (Gym at Judson, 243 Thompson St. 866-811-4111. Through Aug. 30.)

Hamilton

In a way, this show makes even more sense on Broadway. After a wildly successful—indeed, historic—run at the Public, earlier this year, the groundbreaking musical about the rise, fall, and death of the Founding Father Alexander Hamilton (played with verve by Lin-Manuel Miranda, who also wrote the book, music, and lyrics) now has a larger stage and a bigger house in which to celebrate its particular brilliance. Miraculously, none of the orchestrations or performances have got “big” for

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the move to Broadway, and that's a good thing: you can hear the lyrics without excessive amplification. Still, the second act is not as strong as the first, and Miranda relies on familiar tropes to keep the thing going—all ending with a view of Heaven. But it's worth seeing just the same, because it really does beat a new path for the American musical, and, boy, did the form need it. (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 800-745-3000.)

Informed Consent

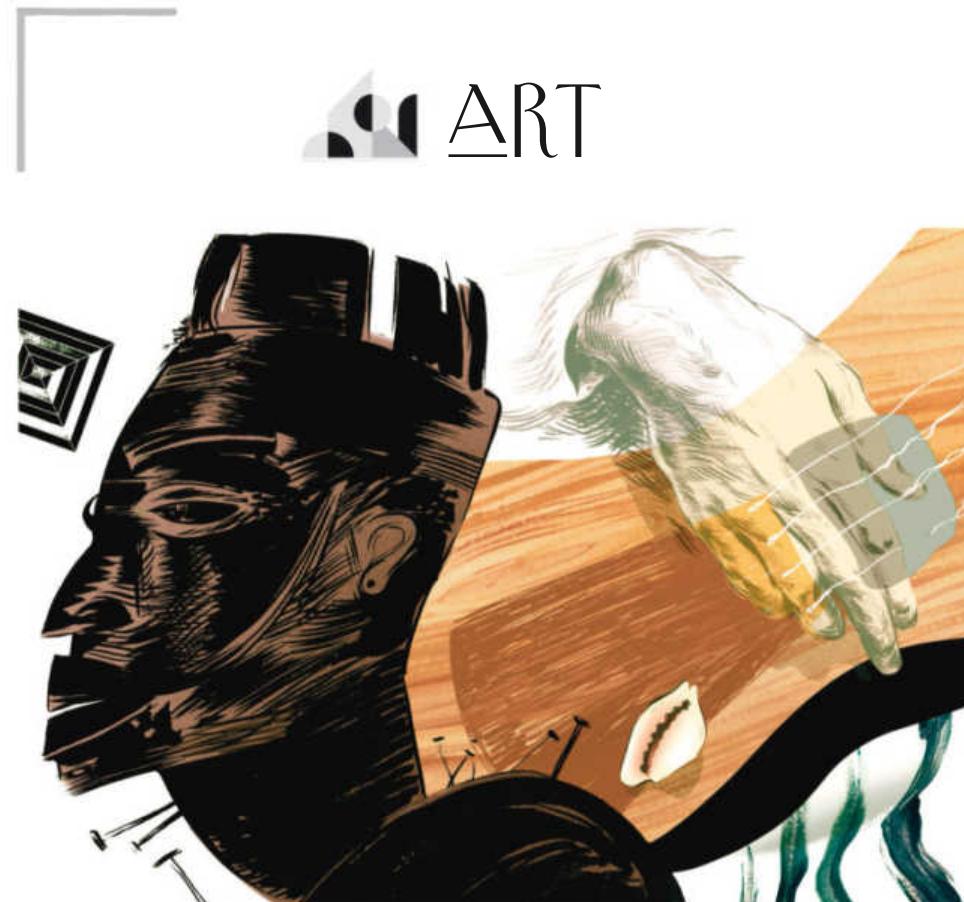
Part story theatre and part TED talk, Deborah Zoe Laufer's play dramatizes a case in which a Native American tribe sued a geneticist and her university for the unauthorized use of its DNA samples. In this co-production from Primary Stages and Ensemble Studio Theatre/Alfred P. Sloan Foundation Project, a messy, absorbing study in medical ethics gets tidier as Laufer adds convenient psychology and a fairy-tale framing device. Tina Benko plays Jillian, an overzealous researcher who has personal reasons for investigating the tribe's genes: her mother died of early-onset Alzheimer's, and she has a marker for that same disease. Her daughter might have it, too. She hopes that information obtained from these samples will eventually bankroll a dedicated lab, then a cure. Benko, often very fine, is a little overzealous herself, as are four other actors in multiple roles, a consequence, perhaps, of Liesl Tommy's affectionate, indulgent direction. (The Duke on 42nd Street, 229 W. 42nd St. 646-223-3010.)

John

Annie Baker's new play is so good on so many levels that it casts a unique and brilliant light. The time is now. A twenty-nine-year-old musician named Elias (rendered, with just the right amount of sourpuss passive-aggressiveness, by Christopher Abbott) has come to stay at a bed-and-breakfast in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania, with his Asian girlfriend, the thirty-one-year-old Jenny (Hong Chau). The place is run by Mertis (Georgia Engel, whose performance is a wonder), a seventy-two-year-old baby-voiced blonde. Her best friend, Genevieve (Lois Smith), is a blind "seer" who tells it like it is. Running about three hours and fifteen minutes, the piece unfolds beautifully, creating a kind of naturalistic but soulful theatre that many of Baker's contemporaries and near-contemporaries have disavowed in their rush to be "postmodern." All the performers are excellent, but it's Engel's commitment and presence that give the show its powerful grace. (Reviewed in our issue of 8/24/15.) (Pershing Square Signature Center, 480 W. 42nd St. 212-244-7529.)

Mercury Fur

Philip Ridley's controversial play caused a theatrical brouhaha when it debuted, in England, in 2005. In the New Group's unrewarding revival, it's difficult to see just what the fuss was about. The script crams a house of horrors into the living room of a ruined apartment somewhere downtown, after a series of violent upheavals have ravaged New York. A troupe of orphaned teens bands together to throw parties at which paying clients can enact their most debauched and decadent fantasies. During tonight's soirée, a polo-shirted banker plans to torture and kill a child for libidinal thrills. This would be deeply upsetting if it were more involving. But, under Scott Elliott's direction, few in the cast have a knack for Ridley's ghastly, fantastic language—a figurative whirligig of crocodiles, kittens, and napalm. Fewer still can deliver it with any credible feeling. (Pershing Square Signature Center, 480 W. 42nd St. 212-279-4200.)



Abstract paintings by the New Yorker Frank Stella, magnificent *nkisi* from the Kongo, Picasso's radical sculptures, and Renaissance drawings by the Florentine master Andrea del Sarto arrive in museums.

FALL PREVIEW

THE ART SEASON KICKS OFF with two blockbusters in three dimensions: "**Picasso Sculpture**," at MOMA, opening on Sept. 14, and "**Kongo: Power and Majesty**," a five-century tour of Central African artifacts at the Met, beginning Sept. 18. Less well-known than his paintings, Picasso's sculptures—guitars, goats, glasses of absinthe—are just as relentlessly radical, and were so close to the artist's heart that he held on to most of them while he was alive. MOMA devotes its entire fourth floor to around a hundred and fifty examples, in materials ranging from bronze and plaster to wicker and forks. The Met's show was inspired by a recent acquisition: a magnificent nineteenth-century Mangaaka power figure, carved from wood, embedded with a cowrie shell, and studded with nails. The sprawling show of carved ivories, raffia textiles, and *nkisi* sculptures (on loan from fifty private and public collections) sheds new light on the Kongo civilization.

The first monographic show in the U.S. of the Florentine High Renaissance painter **Andrea del Sarto** opens at the Frick on Oct. 7. Hugely popular in his lifetime, Andrea was edged out of the history books by such peers as Michelangelo and Raphael. Some fifty exquisitely naturalistic red-chalk drawings hang alongside three canvases. The Whitney surveys the career of the divisive abstract painter **Frank Stella**, in a show that opens Oct. 30. Now seventy-nine, the American artist achieved notoriety out of the gate, in the late nineteen-fifties, with stark black paintings whose titles were lifted from the Third Reich. His aesthetic shift in the seventies—away from less-is-more minimalism toward a pile-it-on, polychrome baroque—had some fans crying foul, but Stella stayed true to his vision. Also on Oct. 30, the young and much-buzzed-about artist **Rachel Rose**, a Manhattan native, makes her solo début in the U.S. at the Whitney, with the new video installation "Everything and More," which mixes new and found footage in response to the museum's Renzo Piano building.

—Andrea K. Scott

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum

"Grand Illusions: Staged Photography from the Met Collection"

Since its inception, the medium of photography has combined fact with fiction—based on the evidence here, it has made everything from casting a spell to escaping a fire look fantastically real. This is hardly a new theme for an exhibition, but it's still a fine excuse for the museum to hang forty very good pictures from its collection, many on view here for the first time. Opening with some of the earliest examples of dramatic staging, the show ranges from Julia Margaret Cameron's 1874 vision of an Arthurian legend to Cindy Sherman's 1978 version of a Hollywood film still. In between, key images remind viewers of the many ways that photography alters or improves on reality, often with commercial intent. Don't miss Paul Outerbridge, Jr.'s hilarious 1939 color picture, shot for A. & P. supermarkets, of an apron-clad, all-male coffee klatch. Through Jan. 18.

Whitney Museum

"America Is Hard to See"

The museum has opened in Renzo Piano's ingenious new building, on Gansevoort Street, and brings with it a refurbished sense of mission for the eighty-four-year-old institution, signalled by the inaugural show, of six hundred and fifty works from the permanent collection. The timing couldn't be better for a detailed and vividly embodied engagement with the question of what has been meant by "American" modern art. The Whitney's parochial mandate seemed a handicap during the past century of marching cosmopolitan styles, from Post-Impressionism and Cubism to minimalism and the myriad variants of conceptual art. Nationalism was then a bugaboo. But the restriction becomes a strength as, day after day in the headlines, one dream after another of a borderless world flames out. A national perspective offers a sturdy point of reference amid the redundancies of a nowhere-in-particular globalized culture. Through Sept. 27.

Museum of Arts and Design

"Pathmakers: Women in Art, Craft, and Design, Midcentury and Today"

No coherent argument emerges from this diffuse exhibition of female artists and designers, but it's gorgeous nonetheless. The first section includes labyrinthine prints by Anni Albers; groovy circular dresses by Vuokko Eskolin-Nurmesniemi (best known for her work with Marimekko); a Lee Krasner painting composed of green and white daubs; similarly colored pots by Toshiko Takaezu; and once overlooked, now all-the-rage fibre artworks by Sheila Hicks, Olga de Amaral, and Lenore Tawney, whose intricate, suspended linen weaving from 1962 is studded with gold. The exhibition's contemporary half has two standouts: Hella Jongerius's designs for a lounge at the United Nations, which include a hand-knotted rope curtain with fat porcelain beads, and Polly Apfelbaum's outstanding "Handweaver's Pattern Book," a joyous exploration of difference and repetition via stenciled marker on fabric. Through Sept. 30.

National Museum of the American Indian

"Cerámica de los Ancestros: Central America's Past Revealed"

Between the Aztec and Andean empires that dominate our view of pre-Columbian art were less bellicose, more egalitarian civilizations, where everyday objects had otherworldly significance and beauty was a way of life. This superb show, drawn from the Smithsonian's holdings, considers

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RÖDÉÖ: FOUR DANCE EPISODES
SLAUGHTER ON TENTH AVENUE
SWAN LAKE
WORLD PREMIERES BY BINET,
BRANDSTRUP, PECK, SCHUMACHER,
AND THATCHER

Winter JAN 19 - FEB 28

BALLO DELLA REGINA
LA SYLPHIDE
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THIS BITTER EARTH
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seven, with a concentration on the ceramics they created and traded. Zoomorphism dominates. A vessel from Greater Nicoya (now Costa Rica) has the form of a snarling jaguar; pots and plates from Coclé (now Panama) sport highly stylized monkeys and crocodiles. Polychrome jars from the Ulúa River Valley (contemporary Honduras) offer a glimpse of bygone rituals: encircling one pot is an image of dancers with rattles performing for their enthroned chief. (Chemical testing of some vessels here confirms that they contained chocolate, the drink of choice for Meso-American nights out.) The show also tells a story of the adventurers, canal builders, and fruit barons who collected these prizes, and the subsequent disinterest of scholars and curators, who, until the mid-seventies, failed to grasp the power of Central American culture in its own right. Through January, 2017.

New Museum

"Leonor Antunes: I Stand Like a Mirror Before You"

In this densely packed installation by the Portuguese artist, who lives in Berlin, five hanging brass lattices, inspired by Anni Albers's textiles, are accompanied by sensuous cargo nets made of black and brown leather. Underfoot is a tessellation of cork and linoleum triangles; oscillating baffles of clear and frosted glass divide and reflect. Any one of these elements

would look right at home at ABC Carpet, and Antunes even proposes her own lighting fixtures, swank minimalist things with fashionable, exposed bulbs. But experienced together, the parts cohere into a seductive whole that revalorizes one of art's all but lost virtues: craftsmanship. Through Sept. 6.

Queens Museum

"Robert Seydel:

The Eye in the Matter"

In his late thirties, the American artist, who died in 2011, at the age of fifty, began making small collages from vintage photographs, etchings, and bits of detritus which channelled an eccentric mid-century sensibility. He even created an alter ego: Ruth Greisman, named for his aunt, who spent her adult life with her brother in Queens. Some works here achieve a miniaturist poetry, including a pocket-lint rabbit leaping toward a midnight sky made from a scrap of stained fabric. Unfortunately, such preciousness often skews twee, as do the writings of the fictional Greisman, stream-of-consciousness texts that were typed on yellowed paper and illuminated. The words convey the same lonely spirit that recurs in a collage that reads "Ruth": a cabinet card of a Victorian child, dressed in white lace, whose face is obscured by a skull-like corroded bottle cap. The outer-borough Surrealism of Joseph Cornell casts a long shadow

here—in fact, Seydel casts him as the object of Greisman's affections. Through Sept. 27.

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

"Back"

Photographs of people who are facing away from the camera simultaneously frustrate and fascinate—they're mysteries waiting to be solved. In this engaging show, pictures of nudes by Harry Callahan, Lucas Samaras, Lee Friedlander, and Viviane Sassen convey intimate information, but clothed bodies look just as eloquent. In Paul Graham's great shot of a British club-goer in the late nineties, the backward tilt of a young woman's head signals end-of-the-night resignation. David Goldblatt's picture of a black South African asleep on the grass suggests a more profound exhaustion. Through Aug. 28. (Pace/MacGill, 32 E. 57th St. 212-759-7999.)

GALLERIES—CHELSEA

Jacob Aue Sobol

Between 2012 and 2014, the Danish photographer took the Trans-Siberian Railway to Moscow, Beijing, and many, many villages in between. Some of his grainy black-and-white pictures were shot from moving trains; others record personal encounters, often with couples seen naked in bed. Without descriptive captions, Sobol's "Arrivals and Departures" series blends into

one long and extraordinary trip—not a tourist jaunt but a view of the underground, impoverished and vaguely bohemian. William Klein, Roger Ballen, and especially the Dutch master Ed van der Elsken have covered similarly harsh territory, but Sobol stakes his own solid claim. Through Aug. 28. (Milo, 245 Tenth Ave., at 24th St. 212-414-0370.)

GALLERIES—DOWNTOWN

"Image Objects"

The one standout in this half-hearted, digitally themed show of outdoor works comes from Artie Vierkant, who presents a sliced steel cube printed with chromatic distortions. It's the latest iteration in an ongoing project in which he photographs his own work, alters the image in Photoshop, prints the result as a new work, and so on. Vierkant alone seems to understand that distinctions between digital and "real" are obsolete. Other works feel more literal: Amanda Ross-Ho frames a bust with a neon square, mimicking facial-recognition software, and Lothar Hempel equips a printout of a skateboarder with the rainbow "loading" symbol that Mac users know as the spinning beach ball of death. With additional pieces by Alice Channer, Jon Rafman, Timur Si-Qin, and Hank Willis Thomas. Through Nov. 20. (Public Art Fund at City Hall Park, Broadway between Chambers St. and Park Row. 212-223-7800.)

ABOVE & BEYOND

"Taste of Tennis"

At this series of events, which precedes the start of the U.S. Open, tennis whites means napkins. On Aug. 26, the chefs Marc Murphy, Jonathan Waxman, Floyd Cardoz, Daniel Holzman, and Bill Telepan face off on the courts of the CityView Racquet Club, where the "Top Chef Masters" finalist Kerry Heffernan and the SNY anchor Michelle Yu are the hosts. The following night, tennis pros and top local chefs show off their culinary skills, and on the 29th there's a party where you can rub elbows with Sloane Stephens, Victoria Azarenka, and John Isner. (tasteoftennis.com)

Morbid Anatomy Flea Market

A previous sale, in June, at the Morbid Anatomy Museum, in Gowanus, Brooklyn, was so popu-

lar that attendees had to wait two and a half hours for the chance to peruse and purchase bowls of human teeth, handmade anthropomorphized taxidermy mice in glass domes, antique medical instruments, aardvark skulls, and other rare or just plain eccentric objects that would frighten children and delight oddity collectors. This time around, the organizers are taking over the expansive and nearby Bell House, which means that curiosity seekers can enjoy more than just what's on the shelf—because who wants to view shrunken heads without a cocktail in hand? Featured vendors include the celebrity collector Ryan Matthew Cohn, of the Science Channel's "Oddities," who will have two tables of bones, antiquities, and dead things in jars; Daisy Tainton, who constructs beautiful

and intricate shadowbox dioramas starring insects; Amber Jolliffe Maykut, who makes what might be the world's cutest taxidermy art; Will Baker, a rare-book and ephemera collector from Pittsburgh; and Evan Michelson and Mike Zohn, from Manhattan's Obscura Antiques. (149 7th St., Brooklyn. morbidanatomy.museum.org. Aug. 30, from noon to six.)

READINGS AND TALKS

Greenlight Bookstore

Elisabeth Egan, the books editor of *Glamour*, reads from her debut novel, "A Window Opens." Wine will be served. (686 Fulton St., Brooklyn. 718-246-0200. Aug. 26 at 7:30.)

Word

To mark the release of Clarice Lispector's "The Complete Stories,"

the collection's editor, Benjamin Moser, sits down with the novelist Porochista Khakpour ("The Last Illusion"). (126 Franklin St., Brooklyn. 718-383-0096. Aug. 27 at 7.)

BookCourt

The Brooklyn bookstore, in conjunction with Slate, is celebrating the English release of "The Story of the Lost Child," the fourth and final novel in Elena Ferrante's Neapolitan tetralogy. The participants are Laura Bennett, a senior editor at Slate; Ann Goldstein, Ferrante's translator and an editor at this magazine; Michael Reynolds, of Europa Editions; Sasha Weiss, a story editor at the *New York Times Magazine*; and the writers Laura Miller, Meghan O'Rourke, Willa Paskin, and Katy Waldman. (163 Court St. 718-875-3677. Sept. 1 at 7.)



TABLES FOR TWO

LITTLE PARK

85 West Broadway (212-220-4110)

ANDREW CARMELLINI'S LATEST TRIBECA RESTAURANT has a conundrum that could be filed under Good Problem to Have. The vegetable-focussed food is so good, so gorgeous and seasonal, that the setting, a curtained annex to the Smyth Hotel that has changed hands twice in the past two years, feels incongruously dispassionate. The blond-wood tables with straw-colored banquets are nice enough, and the room is hushed and tasteful, but how lovely it would be to eat this exuberant food, like the luscious pea soup, in a garden! (A New Yorker can dream.) The soup is made from the freshest peas, puréed into a cool, thick Kelly-green cream, topped with a crunchy little salad of minted sugar-snap peas and a scoop of horseradish ice cream—this is the exquisite taste of summer.

How is it that the tomatillos, tossed with white cabbage and cilantro, sitting quietly at the side of a house-made-duck-sausage banh mi, taste like such sweet, healthy candy? At lunch recently, this was preceded by more tomatoes, multi-hued heirlooms, prettily mixed with green Castelvetrano olives and piled on top of a spelt crisp spread with garlicky white-bean purée. The tomatoes' strong competition for best appetizer was the utterly unsuspecting beetroot tartare. A disk of shredded cooked beets sounds the opposite of exciting, but there it was, with horseradish cream and a buttered rye crumble and topped with smoked trout roe, like some kind of perverse, delicious beet Brown Betty. Last place went to the obligatory burrata, which was sadly dry, and given little help from macerated strawberries, even though they were the tiny, ostentatiously natural variety.

Summer has been good to Little Park, but Carmellini doesn't just do vegetables. Grilled sardines are tangy with vinegar; tuna crudo is extravagantly garnished with microgreens, beech mushrooms, and Fresno pepper; dreary farro tagliatelle is made fun with crab, asparagus, peas, and a lemon kick. A hefty aged lamb porterhouse is served on the bone with fermented hot sauce; strip steak is charred to medium rare. It's not until the meat comes out that you realize there's not a starch in sight. Fries with that steak wouldn't kill anyone, although the tangle of dazzlingly bright greens is quite distracting.

The room may be subdued, but that afternoon it was livened up by a waitress with the guileless charisma of Sandra Bullock in her rom-com heyday. When asked what to do about dessert, she explained her predilection for the malted-milk panna cotta: "I'm a Whopper person." Sounds like fun. Even better was a moist blueberry cake with corn ice cream. It will be interesting to see what Carmellini can do with the grim array of local root vegetables of a New York winter. But first, September should be glorious.

—Shauna Lyon

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ILLUSTRATION BY MATTHEW HOLLISTER

PHOTOGRAPH BY ERIC HELGAS



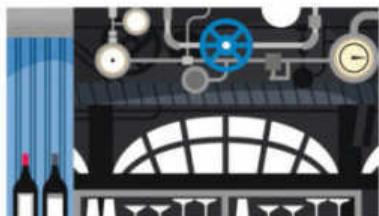
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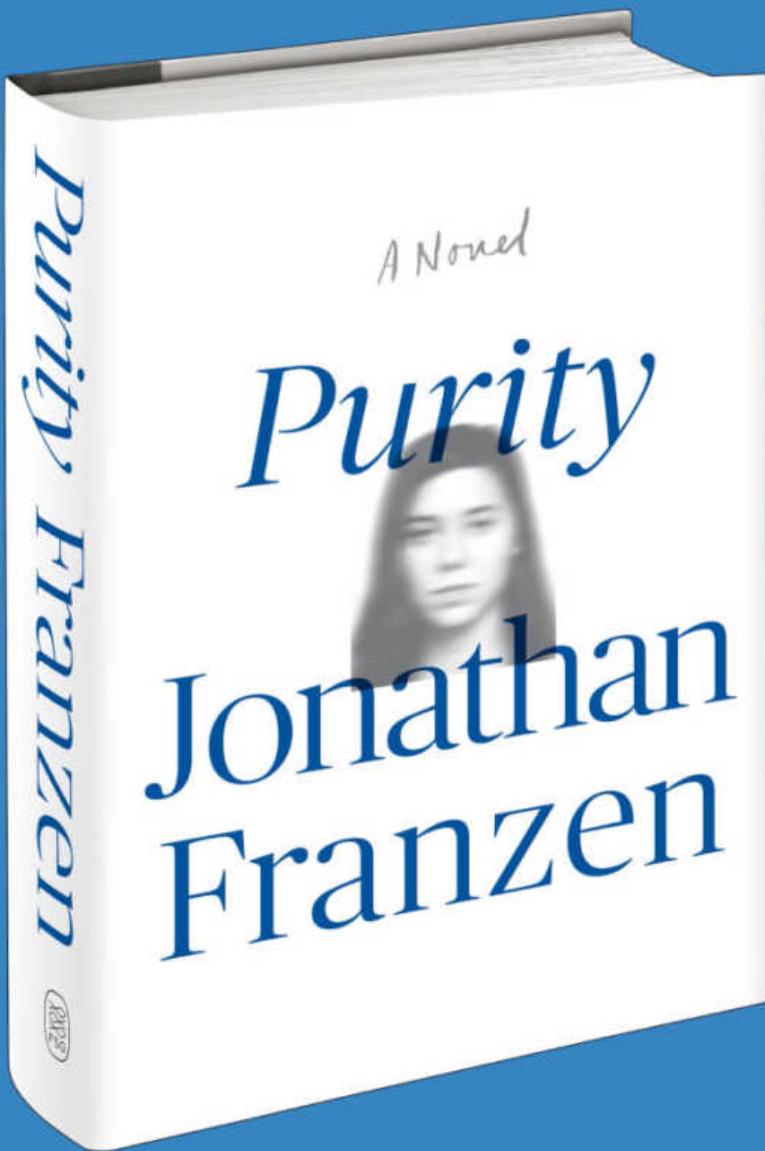
22 Battery Pl. (212-785-0153)

If, a few years ago, you ever passed by the Statue of Liberty ferry dock and wondered about the huge white wooden building on the Battery Park pier—long abandoned, as eerie and old-world as the nearby Merchant Mariners' memorial—you can now investigate its mysteries yourself. After extensive big-budget renovations, Peter Poulakacos and his team (Le District; the forthcoming Nammos) have converted the landmarked former municipal building, which once housed the city's docks department, into a twenty-eight-thousand-square-foot nautical-themed megavenu. The top floor is a private-event space and the second is a fancy-dining zone, but ground level is for everybody: a polished-wood bar, with Lusitania memorabilia and gauges galore, and the pier outside, where the real action is. On a recent Monday evening, tourists and locals sat under umbrellas at picnic tables, ate fish and chips, drank rosé, and gazed out at the splendiferous harbor views: ferries, birds, barges, clouds, water taxis, sailboats, schooners, flags, Castle Clinton, speedboats, the Statue of Liberty, the Verrazano-Narrows. Several house cocktails, such as the Clock Tower Sour and the Lazarus, were punch-bowl sweet, but the gingery Dark and Stormy on tap had some razzmatazz. The setting sun cast a rosy glow from the west; the refurbished clocktower bong-bong-ed every hour. On the pier, you feel a bit floaty; once you get your sea legs, you'll want to linger all evening.

—Sarah Larson



From the *New York Times* bestselling author of
THE CORRECTIONS and ***FREEDOM***



ON
SALE
SEPT. 1

TOUR CITIES

- Corte Madera, CA — Book Passage: Tuesday, September 1
Santa Rosa, CA — Copperfield's Books at Santa Rosa High School: Wednesday, September 2
Portland, OR — Powell's Books at Cedar Hills Crossing: Tuesday, September 8
Seattle, WA — The Elliott Bay Book Company at Town Hall Seattle: Wednesday, September 9
San Francisco, CA — Books, Inc. at Opera Plaza: Thursday, September 10
Los Angeles, CA — Skylight Books at Aratani Theatre at the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center: Saturday, September 12
Minneapolis, MN — Talking Volumes at the Fitzgerald Theater: Tuesday, September 15
Kansas City, MO — Rainy Day Books at Unity Temple on the Plaza: Wednesday, September 16
St. Louis, MO — Left Bank Books at Skip Viragh Center for the Arts: Thursday, September 17
Austin, TX — BookPeople: Saturday, September 19
Houston, TX — Brazos Bookstore at Inprint Reading Series at Cullen Theater in Wortham Center: Monday, September 21
Oxford, MS — Off Square Books: Tuesday, September 22
Nashville, TN — Parnassus Books at Blair School of Music at Vanderbilt University: Wednesday, September 23
New York, NY — 92nd Street Y: Thursday, September 24
New York, NY — Barnes & Noble, Union Square: Friday, September 25
Brooklyn, NY — Greenlight Bookstore at Tuohy Hall at St. Joseph's College: Saturday, September 26
San Francisco, CA — City Arts & Lectures at Nourse Theater: Tuesday, December 8



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THE TALK OF THE TOWN

COMMENT KEEPING SECRETS

Hillary Clinton, in her memoir "Living History," recounts her struggle to defend her privacy while residing in the White House. Some of her stories have a gothic tone. After Bill Clinton's first inauguration, Harry and Linda Thomason, friends from Hollywood, found a jocular note under a pillow in the Lincoln Bedroom. It was from Rush Limbaugh, the conservative radio host. How did the note get there? "I don't believe in ghosts, but we did sometimes feel that the White House was haunted by more temporal entities," Clinton writes.

A few months later, as she grieved over the death of her father, she noticed that furniture in the living quarters had been disturbed. She discovered that security officers had searched for bugging devices, without consulting her. "I suddenly remembered the Rush Limbaugh note," she writes. "I was undone by the invasion of privacy. Yes, we were living in a house that belongs to our nation. But there's an understanding that individuals who occupy it are allowed some rooms of their own."

That sensibility partly explains this summer's Clinton non-scandal or mini-scandal or proto-scandal, as it may be. The matter arose from a decision by Clinton when she was the Secretary of State to eschew the government's e-mail system for a private one. In this hot summer of Donald Trump's smash reality show and excited crowds for Clinton's Democratic challenger Bernie Sanders, the e-mail imbroglio is giving her supporters indigestion. The headlines recall the bewildering, partisan-inflamed, and largely inconsequential controversies that surfaced during her husband's Presidency—Whitewater, Travelgate, the Paula Jones case, the Monica Lewinsky matter, and, finally, President Clinton's impeachment hearings. It was an era in Washington about which only white-collar defense lawyers may feel nostalgic.

Now the Clintons again confront a scrum of Republican congressmen and conservative activists who are clearly out to get them. Yet the tenacity of Republican opposition

researchers does not by itself explain why Clinton and her husband are so often beset by accusation. Both of them too often co-author their dramas by obfuscating and tolerating conflicts of interest, such as when, between 2009 and 2013, with Hillary Clinton guiding American foreign policy, the Clinton Foundation accepted large donations from foreign governments, including several that abuse human rights.

The e-mail case is, so far, a more ambiguous tangle. In late 2008 or early 2009, the incoming Secretary installed a private server at her New York home. She has said that she wanted to avoid carrying multiple e-mail devices, something that using the State Department system might have required. "What was supposed to be convenient has turned out to be anything but convenient," Clinton remarked last week. Late last year, Clinton turned over to the State Department about thirty thousand e-mails from her home system. But, before doing so, she and her attorneys singled out more than thirty thousand other e-mails, which they deemed to be "private," and, as far as is known, deleted them permanently. Clinton has said that the deleted notes concerned only "yoga routines, family vacations," and the like. Her unilateral culling raised eyebrows, but her lawyers approved her action, and her assertion of privacy rights seems to have resonated with Democratic voters.

Now, however, the F.B.I. is involved. This is because an inspector general for U.S. intelligence agencies, and another for the State Department, reviewed a sample of Clinton's e-mails and identified classified information in some of them. By near-automatic protocol, that finding was referred to the Justice Department. One of the F.B.I.'s tasks in the weeks ahead will be to look into whether, amid all the e-mailing to and from Secretary Clinton, any crime may have been committed, by anyone. There is no indication that Clinton is the target of a criminal inquiry.

Unfortunately for the candidate, though, the law around handling classified infor-



mation can resemble a house of mirrors. The federal government routinely classifies many more documents than it needs to, including ones containing publicly known or harmless information. Consequently, government employees must treat subjects widely covered in the media, such as the fact that the U.S. carries out lethal drone strikes, as if they were super-secret. And even the most innocuous discussions with foreign government officials may be judged classified. This is often silly, yet the F.B.I. goes by the book. If Clinton and her aides swapped classified information over an unsecured e-mail system, they could be questioned about mishandling state secrets.

That misdemeanor has ensnared several high office-holders in the recent past. In 2001, John Deutch, President Clinton's second C.I.A. director, admitted to a single count of mishandling classified material, because he kept top-secret files at home on a Macintosh connected to the open Internet. (Bill Clinton pardoned him.) In 2005, Samuel Berger, a former Clinton Administration national-security adviser, pleaded guilty to a misdemeanor, because, after leaving office—for reasons that remain unclear—he removed classified documents from the National Archives and destroyed them. Earlier this year, General David Petraeus pleaded to a misdemeanor after allowing his mistress and biographer to read sensitive notebooks that he kept when he ran the C.I.A.

In each of those cases, the evidence of serious or willful neglect was much clearer than anything that has emerged about Hillary Clinton's e-mailing. It has not yet been independently determined whether any of the classified information in her correspondence was marked as such, for example, or how sensitive the secrets discussed might have been. Still, it is conceivable that more striking evidence of deception or serious neglect may eventually surface, and, in any event, the investigations will go on—and on and on, if past inquiries of this type are any guide.

Hillary Clinton's vulnerabilities as a Presidential candidate are visible and often remarked upon—conspicuous wealth, a self-protecting style, and the baggage accumulated during three decades in public life. Her strengths are less often acknowledged. For one thing, she is a formidable campaigner—always on message, gaffe-free in debates and town halls, encyclopedic on policy, and comfortable with confrontation and competition. News cycles about faltering front-runners are as much a ritual of early primary seasons as eating pork on a stick at the Iowa State Fair. Hillary Clinton's campaign is only starting. It will likely be another August before anyone can rate her chances to return to the temporally haunted living quarters she knew as a spouse, to take up rooms of her own.

—Steve Coll

THE BENCH SKETCHY



Since it began, seven months ago, the national controversy surrounding the proper amount of air in a football—Deflategate, familiarly; Ballghazi, more creatively—remains confusing. “This Deflategate. I’m not sure where the *gate* comes from,” Judge Richard Berman said at the federal courthouse on Pearl Street earlier this month, during a hearing between lawyers representing the N.F.L. and the New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady, who is accused of being complicit in the siphoning of air from footballs. The saga feels as much like performance art as it does scandal, and the latest installment, concerning a gargoyle-ish courtroom sketch of Brady, one of *People’s* Sexiest Men Alive, fits right in. The sketch went viral, with commenters likening the portrait to Lurch, Quasimodo, Munch’s screamer, and Michael Jackson in “Thriller.” Some Brady supporters pegged the artist as a vengeful Jets fan sending a

message: Retirement looms, Brady. Others compared it to Picasso’s portrait of Gertrude Stein. When people said that Stein looked nothing like the woman in the painting, Picasso replied, “She will.”

The image of Brady as a haggard prisoner surrounded by handlers captured a deeper truth about Deflategate. “This isn’t about Tom Brady—it’s a settlement conference with a sea of lawyers!” Jane Rosenberg, the courtroom artist who did the sketch, said last week in her Upper West Side apartment. Rosenberg, who wore an orange shirt, orange sandals, and orange toenail polish, had no idea what Deflategate was before the hearing, and she had to Google Brady to see what he looked like. “He’s very handsome—everything perfectly lined up, chiselled face, beautiful blue eyes,” she said. She added, “I apologize to Tom Brady for not making him as good-looking as he is, O.K.?”

Rosenberg has been sketching trials in pastel chalk for thirty-five years; she met her husband, a criminal-defense attorney, when he asked her out after she drew one of his arraignments. She is open to critical suggestions—John Gotti asked her to eliminate his double chin in her sketches, a request she granted—but she has never faced

the combined wrath of Twitter and Photoshop, which Brady fans used to create mashups featuring her drawing. “There was one of E.T., or Yoda, or some thing with weird gecko-ish fingers,” she said, describing a digital collage of her Brady on the body of Gollum. She’s been recognized in Starbucks. “I wish I got this much attention for my *good* paintings,” she said.

On the plus side, the flap launched a frenzy for original Rosenbergs. A witness from the 1992 Gotti trial called to ask if she had any sketches of him on the stand, and someone else bought two of her oil paintings and



Tom Brady

commissioned an original portrait of Brady. A museum in Boston asked to display the Brady sketch, while dozens of potential buyers have inquired about purchasing it. "I want a million bucks," Rosenberg said.

Rosenberg is not sure what the long-term effect of Deflategate will be on her career. "If I'm at a party in twenty years and say I'm a courtroom artist, they'll go, 'Remember that sketch of Tom Brady? That was *you*!'" she said. Brady wasn't required to attend a second hearing held last week, but rumors that he might do so anyway kept Rosenberg up the night before. "I never want to see him again," she said, outside the courthouse. Walking through security, an attorney for the N.F.L. insisted that she go first. "You're the star of the show," he said.

Brady didn't turn up, so Rosenberg started sketching the dozen lawyers in dark suits. "I don't usually get to use the fun colors," she said. "It's mostly browns and gray." She feels that thirty-five years in court has made her a decent judge—"I can usually tell when people are lying"—but with Deflategate she is relieved if she can simply understand some of the issues, as oral arguments delved into such arcana as the ideal-gas law and the court's 1997 ruling in Home Indemnity Co. v. Affiliated Food Distributors Inc. Barring a settlement, Brady will be back in court next week. Rosenberg has vacation plans. She doesn't expect to keep them.

—Reeves Wiedeman

THE MUSICAL LIFE HOME TEAM



In April, Craig Finn, the lead singer and lyricist of the Hold Steady, paid up for the regular-season baseball package on cable, to watch his home-town Minnesota Twins. Finn lives in Greenpoint, Brooklyn, but grew up in Edina, a suburb of Minneapolis. By July, though, it was clear that the Twins weren't going anywhere, and so he gave himself over to his adopted home-town team, the



"Now, how about some affirmations to balance all this negativity?"

• •

Mets. This isn't treason, because (1) the Mets and the Twins are in different leagues, and (2) the Mets are the Mets.

Finn was watching on TV the night that Wilmer Flores, the young Mets shortstop, cried on the field, after hearing that he'd been traded. Then the trade fell through. Flores stayed, and, two days later, hit a walk-off home run in the bottom of the twelfth—a galvanizing moment. Finn was at CitiField that night. "But, truth be told, I left early—after the tenth," he said last week. "So I missed it."

A few weeks later, Finn was in the stands again, behind home plate, watching Matt Harvey, one of the Mets' young aces, pitch against the Colorado Rockies. "A couple of years ago, I went to a game in Minnesota: Twins-Mets," he said. He had to shout a bit to be heard above the music in the stands, so his talking voice began to sound more like his singing voice. "It was thirty-four degrees, and snowing. Harvey was pitching and took a no-hitter into the seventh, but we were all so cold we didn't realize it, and left and went to a bar across the street. We saw on the TV there what was going on and tried to get back in, but they wouldn't let us."

Bad salsa blared from the stadium speakers. Finn looked up at one. "This isn't sustainable for me," he said. The stands out toward left field were empty and quiet-looking, and so after a couple of scoreless innings he headed that way. "I used to do the music for the Twins games," he said. "When guys came up from the minors and had no signature tune, I got to play Hold Steady songs."

Finn had on black jeans, a blue-gray short-sleeved button-down, a Twin Cities ball cap, and the glasses that sometimes get him compared to Peter Sellers. He was drinking a Bud Light but turned down a hot dog. "Every time I can go to a place like this and not eat, I consider it a win," he said. He first got to know New York when he was at Boston College, twenty-five years ago. "We'd come down for the weekend and go to the Peculiar Pub, in the Village. They had lots of different beers, before having lots of different beers was a thing. Half the people in there were from Boston College. They didn't card you."

He moved here from Minnesota in 2000. He was married, his band Lifter Puller had broken up, and he was thinking of getting an Internet job. "Buy a house, have a kid," he said. "New York

was intended to be a not-be-in-a-band thing." But he kept writing, and a few years later he and some friends formed the Hold Steady, the Brooklyn rock band that performs songs about Minnesota.

Now he's no longer married. Never got that job, house, or kid. The Hold Steady played a hundred and twenty dates last year and is currently taking a break. In the meantime, he has made a solo album, his second. It doesn't sound like the Hold Steady, but Finn still sounds like Finn. It's called "Faith in the Future," and you might say—Finn does—that it's his first New York album. "That means it talks about Minneapolis less than the others," he said. It comes out on September 11th, and there's a song on it (sort of) about watching the 9/11 attacks from a friend's roof. There's also one (sort of) about the problem of going out to see live music as you get older, the magic getting harder to come by. He prefers going to see other artists' gigs alone—"I like not worrying about whether you are liking the band"—but



Craig Finn

finds that going with his girlfriend helps ward off intrusions from indie-rock fans. She's a nurse, though, and often works nights. At performances, these days, he tells the story of her working on the thirty-fourth floor of the North Tower of the World Trade Center when the first plane hit. She ignored orders to stay put.

Out in left field, Finn told Twins tales. During the 1965 All-Star Game, the team's owner, to impress visiting journalists, drained their hotel swimming pool, filled it with fresh water, stocked

it with walleye and northern pike, and handed out fishing poles. On the field, Harvey was running through the Rockies. The Mets scored three in the bottom of the eighth, to go up 4–0. Hot streak, October dreams. Finn stayed until the final out.

—Nick Paumgarten

ONE MAN'S TRASH EPHEMERAL



Jack Smith has been described as "the only person I would ever copy" (by Andy Warhol); "the only true underground filmmaker" (John Waters); and "the godfather of performance art" (Laurie Anderson). He appeared in Warhol movies and in Robert Wilson productions; his campy films and performances, with their mummies, mermaids, and harems of veiled drag queens, influenced the work of Matthew Barney, Cindy Sherman, and Ryan Trecartin, to name a few. So how come you likely haven't heard of him?

For one thing, he died relatively young—at fifty-six, in 1989, of AIDS-related pneumonia. He also died without a will; his legal heir was an estranged sister, back in Texas. Fearing that she might destroy his legacy, Smith's friends rushed to his Greene Street apartment, packed mountains of stuff into cardboard boxes, and locked them in a storage unit. In the early aughts, the sister lawyered up. The ensuing standoff lasted until 2008, when the gallerist Barbara Gladstone purchased the entire archive.

The other day, in an airy upstairs office at her Chelsea gallery, Gladstone said she'd learned of the archive's existence from Mary Jordan, who made a documentary about Smith in 2007. "She told me this estate is just sitting there moldering, and there's this big battle and there is a museum that's thinking of buying it but they never get around to it," Gladstone recalled. (The museum, she said, was the Whitney.) Gladstone is eighty and had on a black leather motorcycle jacket and tortoiseshell sunglasses with coaster-size green lenses. She went on, "When

we had the closing, and I was sitting at a table with something like seven lawyers, I thought, Jack should see this. He wouldn't believe the formality of it."

He might have disapproved. Smith adhered to an anti-ownership philosophy, which opposed what he called Landlordism. A manifesto found among his belongings titled "STEALABLE ART!!!!" laments, "A procession of art vampires have helped themselves to the bejeweled abundance!!!" He once picketed MOMA wearing a sandwich board that read, "Demolish Art Museums."

Gladstone said, "To me, the biggest amazement when I looked at everything was that for someone as iconoclastic as that, who didn't care for the system, he saved every scrap. He cared about posterity, or else throw it away! Every little napkin—" She gestured toward some twenty boxes that had been assembled for the perusal of Marvin J. Taylor, the director of the Fales Library, at N.Y.U., and the founder of the library's Downtown Collection, which would be receiving Smith's ephemera. (Gladstone will hold on to the sellable work.)

"David Wojnarowicz was very much that way, too," Taylor said. "For someone who supposedly lived on the streets, you know, he kept his Outward Bound journal from when he was sixteen."

Taylor, who is fifty-four and wore a black T-shirt, jeans, and a silver hoop earring in each ear, said that he'd discovered Smith in the late eighties, when he attended a screening of the artist's best-known work, "Flaming Creatures," a long-banned gender-bending bacchanal. "He's unbelievably sexy," Taylor said, glancing at a TV that was playing one of Smith's shorts. The artist starred, alongside a lobster. He resembled a hippie Dali, his voice reminiscent of Yogi Bear's. The Whitney, MOMA, and the Walker now own editions of Smith's films, restored by Gladstone.

Taylor lifted a red journal from one of the boxes and read a draft of a letter: "Dear Mr. Papp,"—Joe Papp, the founder of the Public Theatre—"May I begin by congratulating you upon being on the right end of the theatre business and secondly avoid the use of the word excited in describing how I feel about the latest of my projects, a

performance/spectacle I call 'The Pirate + the Penguin,' the latest in the series of 9 or 10 penguin opuses." Smith had scribbled in the margin, "I must play pirate."

Taylor kept digging. He pulled out programs, flyers ("A BOILED LOBSTER RAINBOWRAMA COLOR LIGHT BATH WITH ORCHID LAGOON MUSIC"), a playing-card joker on which was written "everybody must bring in a PHOTO of a palm tree," informational pamphlets about living with AIDS, a postcard featuring a nude man covered in tattoos. He flipped open a script for a film titled "Secrets of the Cocktail World":

This is the story of Viola Vayne, one of the world's richest women. She was possessed of eternal youth and was secretly a transvestite. She existed in the cocktail world and lived solely to be rude to social climbers. The Cocktail World! Where affected rapture greets the suggestion of cocktails with all the ecstasy usually reserved for announcing the brand names of new products to one's friends.

Gladstone rifled through Smith's books: "Shakespeare's Tragic Heroes: Slaves of Passion"; "a layman's guide to the booming business of commodity trading"; "Kicking the Coffee Habit"; "Exotic Plants."

"His loft was little, wasn't it?" Gladstone asked. "Where did he keep it all?"

Taylor quoted a play by Charles Ludlam: "Have you no heart, Marguerite?" He assumed the role of Marguerite: "I'm travelling light!"

—Emma Allen

DEPT. OF INNOVATION NICHE PRODUCT



As a kid in Jackson, Kentucky, Julie Sygiel took sewing classes, and in high school she designed her prom dress. It was lavender and poufy. "Truth be told, it didn't come out the way I envisioned it," she said. "But I think that can be said of most things in life." At Brown, she studied chemical engineering. She found her calling while working on a team project for a class in entrepreneurship. "We told our professor, 'We want to make period underwear,'" she recalled,

meaning underpants designed to guard against tampon failure. "He was, like, 'What?'" The assignment became her business. "I've been in underwear since I graduated," she said.

Sygiel is twenty-seven and has long brown hair. "I'm very much a feminist, so I wanted to call it Sexy Period. But then these women kept coming up to me and saying they had recently given birth and they were leaking. That's even more of a taboo. So we rebranded as Dear Kate." She wanted the name to sound like an advice column.

The design of Sygiel's underwear takes into account aspects of femininity that aren't discussed much outside of middle-school bathroom stalls, and wicks them away. Early prototypes involved a plastic layer, but that didn't feel right. "We didn't want a rain slicker," she said. Then she designed a three-layer leak-and stain-resistant fabric made from nylon, lycra, and micro-polyester which she called Underlux (patent pending). She stitched the samples herself. "I had a whole group of friends who would text me when they got their period," she said. "That was one of the most frustrating things about testing: I could only use them twenty-five per cent of the month."

Now Dear Kate, which is headquartered on Varick Street, in SoHo, and manufactures in Queens, has a small, all-female staff that tests prototypes in group try-on sessions in the company ladies' room. Investors have supplied more than a million dollars, and a recent Kickstarter campaign raised another hundred and sixty thousand, enabling Sygiel to expand into yoga pants. "We know better than anyone what you need in your pants if you're not wearing underwear," she said. (At first, the yoga pants were promoted with the tagline "Go Commando," but it turned out there was a competitor called Commando, so it was changed to "Nothing Under.")

On a recent morning, Sygiel headed to Central Park, to a photo shoot for the new line. "These pants are cool!" Alexi Pappas, one of the models, said, inspecting the stitching. "I feel like—you know how bugs have their bodies all segmented?" Pappas, a runner, was one of three recruits, along with a fitness blogger, Grace Kim, and Shay Tucker, who started the Web site A Thick Girl's Closet.

"We always choose models based on what they do, not how they look," Sygiel said. The talent was paid in gift certificates. (Dear Kate briefs start at thirty-six dollars, and the yoga pants cost around a hundred and thirty.) Not all real women are thrilled to be asked to model newfangled power panties. Jennifer Pozner, the executive director of Women in Media & News, wrote an Op-Ed in the *Times* after being asked to appear in a Dear Kate ad. She imagined future employers Googling participants in the campaign and coming upon photos of them "in their skivvies before turning up their resumes." She added, "So much for 'empowering' women."

In Central Park, Sygiel said, "Last summer, we did an underwear shoot here. It was packed with onlookers."

"We decided not to do underwear shoots outside after that," Isabella Giancarlo, the company's marketing manager, said. The panties, which have an athletic, full-coverage look, would be shot later that day, in the privacy of a boutique gym.

The group found a spot by the Metropolitan Museum, and set down their tote bags on a few benches.

"The fashion world is all about fantasy," Tucker said. "You have to be able to validate yourself."

"Women just need to stop bashing women," Kim said.

The models took turns running and posing, as Giancarlo called out styling suggestions ("Do they maybe need some blush and lip color?") and encouragement ("Your butt looks really good!").

Kim changed into green sneakers. "What are you guys craving for lunch?" Giancarlo asked.

"Something that won't make my stomach stick out for the underwear shoot," Kim said.

"Good point," Tucker said. "No pasta."

The models jogged back and forth along a path in front of Turtle Pond. "Don't worry so much about being in formation!" the photographer called out. (She was also wearing the yoga pants.)

A man in a trench coat approached, oblivious of the shoot. The models stopped and turned to Sygiel.

"We don't want him!" Pappas shouted. "He's not wearing the right pants!"

—Betsy Morais

CLASS NOTES

What's really at stake when a school closes?

BY JELANI COBB



Jamaica High School, in Queens, was once the largest high school in the United States. For most of its history, it occupied a majestic Georgian Revival building on Gothic Drive, designed in the nineteen-twenties by William H. Gompert, who had begun his career at McKim, Mead & White. With east and west wings, granite columns, and an elaborate bell tower, the building looked like a state capitol that had been dropped into the middle of a residential neighborhood; it sat on the crest of a hill so imposing that planners would have been guilty of pretense had it housed anything other than a public institution.

One evening in June of last year,

Jamaica students wearing red and blue gowns gathered with their families and teachers and with members of the school staff at Antun's, a catering hall in Queens Village, for the senior-class commencement ceremony. Accompanying the festivities was the traditional graduation boilerplate—about life transitions and rising to new challenges—but it carried a particular significance on this occasion, because it was as applicable to the faculty and the staff, some of whom had been at the school for nearly three decades, as it was to the students. After a hundred and twenty-two years, Jamaica High School was closing; the class of 2014, which had just

twenty-four members, would be the last.

The New York City Department of Education had announced the closure three years earlier, citing persistent violence and a graduation rate of around fifty per cent. Accordingly, the department had begun to “co-locate” four newly created “small schools” in the old building. Advocates argue that small schools can best resolve many of the ills associated with urban education, but the reorganization produced a logistical problem. The schools tended to operate like siblings competing for bathroom time. Access to the building’s communal spaces was at a premium. Unable to secure the auditorium for a graduating class of two dozen, Jamaica High School found itself, both figuratively and literally, pushed out.

Underscoring the indignities that attended the school’s last days was a difficult irony: for much of its time, Jamaica was a gemstone of the city’s public-education system. In 1981, the schools chancellor, Frank Macchiarola, decided to take on the additional role of an interim high-school principal, in order to better appreciate the daily demands of school administration. He chose Jamaica, and was roundly criticized for picking such an easy school to lead. Four years later, the U.S. Department of Education named it one of the most outstanding public secondary schools in the nation. Alumni include Stephen Jay Gould, Attorney General John Mitchell, Representative Sheila Jackson Lee, Walter O’Malley, Paul Bowles, and three winners of the Pulitzer Prize: Gunther Schuller, Art Buchwald, and Alan Dugan. Bob Beamon, who set a world record for the long jump in the 1968 Olympics, graduated with the class of ’65. The school’s closure felt less like the shattering of a perennial emblem of stagnation than like the erasure of a once great institution that had somehow ceased to be so.

Jamaica had become an institution of the type that has vexed city policymakers and educators: one charged with serving a majority-minority student body, most of whose members qualified as poor, and whose record was defined by chronic underachievement and academic failure. Even so, word of the school’s closure angered students and their families, the community, and alumni. I was among them—I graduated with the class

The Jamaica High School building last year and, at right, in 1981.



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of '87—and for me, as for many former students, the school was a figment of recollection, frozen in its academic glory. George Vecsey, the former *Times* sports columnist and a member of the class of '56, accused Joel Klein, Mayor Michael Bloomberg's schools chancellor, of "cooking the books," to make schools slated for closure appear worse than they were, and compared the Department of Education's closure policies to the nihilism of Pol Pot. Vecsey later apologized for having slighted the suffering of Cambodia, but he held to his contention that Klein ruled by dictatorial fiat. He wrote, in a blog, "The city destroyed a piece of history because of its own failure."

There are two broadly competing narratives about school closure. The one commonly told by teachers, students, and many parents at underperforming schools centers on a lack of financial and material resources, which insures that the schools will be unable to meet even minimum standards. Strongly connected to this version is a belief that closure functions as a kind of veiled union-busting: shutting a school allows reformers to sidestep contracts and remove long-term teachers.

Reformers view closure as a necessary corrective to what they see as bloated bureaucracies, inept teachers, and unaccountable unions. They argue that urban schools are often too large to give stu-

dents the attention they need. In 2000, the Gates Foundation began funding education reform, with an emphasis on reducing school size. Nine years later, in an annual newsletter, the foundation reported that its efforts had not met with significant success, particularly with schools "that did not take radical steps to change the culture, such as allowing the principal to pick the team of teachers or change the curriculum." The foundation also said that it "had less success trying to change an existing school than helping to create a new school." The reform movement nationwide increasingly saw closure and the creation of new institutions—as opposed to funding and reorganizing existing schools—as the way forward.

Joel Klein, who as chancellor closed seventy-four schools, disputes the notion that institutions like Jamaica failed owing to a lack of resources. Nor does he believe that size is the only issue. "Where there were thriving large schools, we didn't try to replace them," he told me. The real problem was that the schools had "started getting many kids who were low-performing and entering high school a couple of years behind." The solution was to create "a much more intimate and personalized setting for them"—a phrase at odds with the disruption and the discord that often greet the end of a long-established community institution.

Jamaica's demise became part of the

litany of resentments voiced by opponents of school closure across the country. Rahm Emmanuel's shuttering of nearly fifty schools in Chicago angered black voters and became a major issue in the city's recent mayoral election. In 2010, Adrian Fenty, the mayor of Washington, D.C., was dispatched in an election that was also a referendum on his schools chancellor, Michelle Rhee, who had closed two dozen schools. Yet that reaction raises another confounding question: Why do communities most in need of strong schools oppose shutting down institutions that are failing them? In demanding that a school remain open, are alumni hewing closer to nostalgia than to current reality? Or is the conversation about school closure really a proxy for something more subtle, complex, and intractable?

The impulse to reform public schools in the United States has existed nearly as long as the impulse to build them. The tides of immigrants arriving at the turn of the twentieth century, and the nativist hostilities that greeted them, imbued educators with an assimilationist mission. At mid-century, schools were instilled with Cold War anxiety; the subtext of films like "Blackboard Jungle" and "Rebel Without a Cause" was not only the perils of dissolute youth but also the dangers posed by families and schools that were seen as failing to meet the Soviet challenge. In the civil-rights era, American classrooms were called on to propagate racial equality in the broader society. But no mission completely displaced the one that preceded it, so that, by the end of the century, we expected public education to assimilate students, equalize them, and prepare them to compete globally.

The history of Jamaica High School roughly correlates with the evolving demands placed on public education in New York City. The school was founded in 1892, and, five years later, moved into a small building on Hillside Avenue, with an enrollment of eighty students. Rural Queens County was formally incorporated as a borough of the city in 1898. During the next fifteen years, the Queensboro Bridge opened and the Long Island Rail Road's Jamaica station was expanded, becoming the largest in the system. Commuting



"This one's just like being at a real theatre."

presented a novel alternative to life in the uncorralled bedlam of Manhattan; Queens was transformed into a kind of suburb within the city, and the population boomed. Schools citywide struggled to keep up with the demands created by both immigration and population redistribution. In "The Great School Wars," a history of public education in the city, Diane Ravitch writes, "In the early twentieth century the public school was transformed into a vast, underfinanced, bureaucratic social-work agency, expected to take on single-handedly the responsibilities which had formerly been discharged by family, community and employer.... The idea took hold that the public school was uniquely responsible for the Americanization and assimilation of the largest foreign immigration in the nation's history." Jamaica's population reflected the demographic tides in Queens; its classrooms were laboratories for the shaping of better Americans.

In 1925, construction began on the new building, the school's last home, on Gothic Drive. Jamaica took its name from the Jameco, or Yameca, Indians, who once inhabited the area where Kennedy Airport now stands. The name meant "beaver," and the animal, a symbol of industriousness, was chosen as the school mascot. (When I enrolled, students were grumbling that it was time for a new mascot—particularly the cheerleaders, whose sweaters were emblazoned with the word.) The grand structure, completed in 1927, accommodated thirty-four hundred students.

Over the years, the walls of the east wing became an evolving exhibit of the school's history, adorned with photographs of generations of students, faculty, and staff. Those from the first decades showed stern-faced young men in football uniforms; genial, avuncular-looking teachers in suits; and earnest Second World War-era teen-agers, many of them from the growing Greek, Italian, and Jewish neighborhoods to the north and the west of the school. Though racially homogeneous, the student body drew from a cross-section of economic backgrounds. Kids from middle-class Flushing and Kew Gardens sat with students from working-class areas south of the school and others from more affluent enclaves, like Jamaica Estates. By 1950,

the No. 7 subway line had attracted families to the formerly sparse expanses of northern Queens, and the school's enrollment grew to forty-six hundred.

Yearbooks from the fifties show only a few dozen Latino and black students. In 1948, the Supreme Court struck down racially restrictive housing covenants, and a handful of African-American celebrities, including Jackie Robinson, Count Basie, Ella Fitzgerald, and Roy Campanella, bought homes in the exclusive Adisleigh Park section of Queens. (Fame provided only partial insulation from racial resentment; in 1952, a cross was burned near the homes of Robinson and Campanella.) Still, eighty-five per cent of the new housing developments in the borough were closed to blacks. Today, the name South Jamaica includes any number of mostly black neighborhoods south of Liberty Avenue, but at that time it was a well-defined sliver of real estate between the more middle-class areas of St. Albans and Ozone Park. It was where most of the African-American population, including the students enrolled at the high school, lived.

During the nineteen-forties, in a series of landmark tests conducted around the country, the psychologists Kenneth and Mamie Clark demonstrated that black children associated virtue and intelligence with whiteness, and had correspondingly internalized racist stereotypes of inferiority. Robert Carter, an attorney with the N.A.A.C.P. Legal Defense Fund, heard of the Clarks' work and brought it to the attention of Thurgood Marshall, who was then the legal fund's director-counsel. Marshall made the Clarks' findings central to the argument for school desegregation in the Supreme Court case of *Brown v. Board of Education*. The decision made Kenneth Clark famous (while largely overlooking his wife's role in structuring the experiment). Clark, who had grown up in Harlem and was a professor at the City College of New York, then turned his attention to the city government, which, he charged, had fostered segregation in the schools.

Arthur Levitt, then the president of the New York City Board of Education, responded that the schools merely reflected residential patterns: children who attended overwhelmingly black

N

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Photo top to bottom: GILL DOWLING; photos below by JON MCKEEBEN; source: Programme by Imperial Theatre

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Bloomberg Philanthropies

schools lived in overwhelmingly black neighborhoods. A Commission on Integration was set up to examine the issue, with Clark as one of the commissioners, and Levitt as co-chair, and it issued recommendations, which were never quite translated into policy. (Clark resigned, but continued to push for integration throughout his career.) In 1959, the Board of Education experimented by sending four hundred students from overcrowded black schools in Brooklyn to under-attended white schools in the Ridgewood and Glendale sections of Queens. The move was met with ran- corous opposition and a brief boycott that anticipated the riotous response to busing in the seventies.

In 1949, John Ward, an African-American student whose family had migrated to New York from Virginia after the Second World War, enrolled at the school. Ward's father was a bus mechanic, and his mother worked as a domestic; between them, they earned enough to buy a home in Jamaica. Ward recalls the area as a place where Italian-Americans, Polish-Americans, African-Americans, and Jews lived in peaceful proximity. His house was not far from the grocery store that Mario Cuomo's parents owned, and Ward, who played baseball as a boy, re-members the future governor from games in the neighborhood sandlots. The area had not yet entirely shaken its rural roots. "There were still people farming there," Ward told me. "I remember seeing people butcher hogs on Linden Boulevard in the forties and fifties."

Ward wanted to be a teacher, but Woodrow Wilson, the high school that most blacks in the area attended, was a vocational trade school. So he applied to Jamaica, which had acquired a reputation as one of the city's strongest academic high schools. Ward initially found the rigor daunting. "My first semester, I failed about three major classes," he told me. "My father said, 'If you're not going to work at school, you'll have to get a job.'" Ward studied hard and spent an extra semester earning enough academic credits to apply to college. He played baseball well enough to be selected for the All-City team in 1954, his senior year. "I don't really recall there being much racial tension," he said of the school. "The blacks mostly hung out with other black students, but, being an athlete, I interacted

THE SNOWDROPS

Inauspicious between headstones
On Angel Hill, wintry love
Tokens for Murdo, Alistair,
Duncan, home from the trenches,
Back in Balmacara and Kyle,
Cameronians, Gordon Highlanders
Clambering on hands and knees
Up the steep path to this graveyard
The snowdrops whiten, green-
Hemmed frost-piercers, buttonhole
Or posy, Candlemas bells
For soldiers who come here on leave
And rest against rusty railings
Like out-of-breath pallbearers.

—Michael Longley

with a lot more of the white students." For a few years in the fifties, Jamaica's integrated athletics teams, with their winning records, were a point of pride for the school. In 1954, Ward was elected the school's first black class president.

He was accepted at Morgan State University, a historically black institution in Baltimore, but his family couldn't afford the tuition, so he played D-League baseball for a few years, then applied to the New York City police academy, and, in 1960, became one of the first black members of the motorcycle corps. Of the more than three hundred graduates in Ward's police-academy class, fewer than two dozen were African-American. In 1974, he was promoted to a plain-clothes unit working out of the 114th Precinct. "Out of sixteen guys, I was the black on the street-crimes unit," he told me. His career on the force was, at least demographically, a replay of his experiences at Jamaica, and Ward later credited the school with giving him not only an excellent education but also the skills that allowed him to navigate primarily white environments. "Jamaica being integrated in the fifties was something unusual," he told me. "But it was also a place where I felt I belonged."

South Jamaica's black population continued to grow in the fifties and sixties, though not all of it was as economically stable as Ward's family. In 1947, when the Olympian Bob Beamon was

still a baby, his mother died, and he was eventually sent to live with a guardian in a rough part of the neighborhood. After a troubled childhood and a brush with juvenile court, which resulted in his being sent to a remedial, "600" school, Beamon became convinced that if he could get into Jamaica he could turn his life around. Four decades later, in a memoir, "The Man Who Could Fly," he wrote of the school in nearly ecclesiastical terms:

Mr. Louis Schuker, the principal at Jamaica High, had a long talk with me and Coach Ellis. He said the odds of a 600 school student making it in a regular school environment were next to zero. His admonition to me was reminiscent of the one given by the judge who had sentenced me to the 600 school.

"Beamon, any trouble out of you and you are out of here," Mr. Schuker said. "Do I make myself clear?"

"Yes, sir," I answered firmly and clearly. I knew that I wasn't going anywhere but Jamaica High. *This* was where I wanted to be. *This* was where I belonged.

It's easy to wax idealist about the happy spaces of one's childhood, but in Beamon's case the assessment can't be so easily dismissed. He traced his desire to compete in the Olympics to a visit that the track-and-field star Wilma Rudolph, a triple gold medalist in the 1960 Games, paid to Jamaica during his sophomore year. The school was a place where someone like him, who grew up poor in a crime-plagued neighborhood, stood a chance of encountering someone like Rudolph.

Beamon and Ward could have been case studies for Kenneth Clark's advocacy of integration. Political salesmanship warranted that advocates speak of integration as a removal of racial strictures and a kind of democratic communion, but, at its core, it was meant to achieve a redistribution of wealth or, at least, of opportunity. If advantage tended to accrue in places inhabited by whites, integrationists like Clark hoped that by placing black students in physical proximity to whites the benefits would be spread around.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 insured that race could not be used explicitly to prohibit access to public institutions, but there was a big difference in the public's mind between outlawing discrimination and engineering racial diversity. By 1974, when the Supreme Court ruled, in *Miliken v. Bradley*, that school districts could not be compelled to participate in busing programs, the push for integration had already begun to lose momentum. School districts across the country fell back on voluntary integration programs. (A 2007 Supreme Court ruling greatly weakened the ability to do even that.)

Meanwhile, successive tides of immigration in the seventies and eighties transformed Queens into the most ethnically diverse county in the United States. Greek enclaves in Astoria saw an influx of Brazilians, Colombians, Bangladeshis, Chinese, Guyanese, Koreans, Ecuadorans, Romanians, Indians, Filipinos, Albanians, and Bosnians, in addition to Lebanese, Egyptians, Tunisians, Yemeni, and Moroccans. The working-class white areas along Jamaica Avenue became home to Haitian, Jamaican, Dominican, Puerto Rican, Indian, and Pakistani populations. A South Asian community took root south and east of the school. Jamaica High School did not become "integrated" as a consequence of the implementation of a particular set of policy prerogatives. Rather, the school was something more uncommon and more notable: an institution whose diversity simply reflected the entirety of its surrounding communities.

My family moved to Queens about twenty years after John Ward's did, as part of a nascent civil-rights-era black middle class. By 1967, my father, who was an electrician, was earning

enough to buy a home. He and my mother left a tenement in Harlem for a yellow two-story house in Hollis, far enough into Queens that people referred to Manhattan as "the city." The nearest subway stop was a twenty-minute bus ride away. My father considered the move a validation of his decision, at the age of seventeen, to leave his native Georgia and head north.

My mother, who had left Alabama for New York as a teen-ager, and took jobs in the city as a domestic and a hotel telephone operator, now no longer needed to work, and she enrolled in night classes, studying for a B.A. at Queens College. Her American-history class was taught by Herb Sollinger, an adjunct professor who was also a full-time social-studies teacher at Jamaica High School. Tall and fortyish, Sollinger was a brilliant, quirky figure who wore red socks every day and had an encyclopedic grasp of world affairs. My mother, who deeply resented how limited her educational opportunities had been in Alabama, decided that my sister, who was about to start her freshman year, should attend the high school where Sollinger taught. Hollis was not in the district, so my mother filed a less than accurate change-of-address form with the Board of Education, and, the following year, my sister enrolled at Jamaica. Three years later, my older brother did, too.

The narrative of individual ascent in America often elides the many frail contingencies that make success possible. In the late seventies, my father found it increasingly difficult to compete with larger electrical contractors. Then, in 1981, my oldest brother—who had served in Vietnam, had come home addicted to heroin, and had been clean for several years—died, one of the earliest victims of AIDS. My father's business collapsed amid the grief that followed. The contingencies piled up. We moved from the yellow house into a second-floor apartment on a dead-end street in Bricktown, a forgettable stretch of South Jamaica alongside the Long Island Rail Road. That part of Liberty Avenue, the northern boundary of the neighborhood, was home to automotive yards, laundromats, bodegas, and a significant number of bad reputations. Bob Beamon recalled seeing, as a boy,

FALL HIGHLIGHTS

TALKS & READINGS



Fashion Icons with Fern Mallis: Iman
TUE, SEP 8



Election 2016 by the Numbers: Nate Silver and Guests
WED, SEP 9



George Takei with Jordan Roth
SUN, SEP 20

Chelsea Clinton
MON, SEP 21

Jonathan Franzen
Reading from his new novel, *Purity*
THU, SEP 24



Richard Dawkins with Robert Krulwich
WED, SEP 30



Jacques Pépin and Anthony Bourdain
TUE, OCT 6

Sandra Cisneros and Azar Nafisi
Readings from their new works, *A House of My Own* and *The Republic of Imagination: America in Three Books*
WED, OCT 7



Yotam Ottolenghi and Ramael Scully with Sam Kass
WED, OCT 21

Welcome to Night Vale Joseph Fink, Jeffrey Cranor and Cecil Baldwin with Lev Grossman
THU, OCT 22

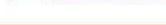
CONCERTS



Angela Hewitt, piano
BACH: The Art of the Fugue
WED, OCT 28



Mavis Staples and Joan Osborne
Solid Soul
WED, NOV 4



Daniil Trifonov, piano
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RACHMANINOFF
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one teen-ager stab another to death there. But Bricktown was zoned for Jamaica High School, and I enrolled as a freshman.

Up to that point, I'd been the type of student who is frequently urged to "apply yourself," but, in a fit of geekdom my freshman year, I developed an obsession with physics—specifically, quarks. A classmate and I started staying behind after science class to discuss subatomic particles with Mr. DeFelice, a wry, mostly gray-haired man who spoke in deliberate cadences that crescendoed at the end of each sentence. He began assigning us additional reading, and eventually recommended us for the honors science track. His affirmation of our potential, coming amid the normal adolescent anxieties and a host of socio-economic ones, still stands out in my memory.

The school was by then a far more polyglot institution than it had been when Ward or Beamon attended. I played right field on a baseball team that included a Jewish third baseman, a Dominican pitcher, a shortstop from Colombia, and an Indian utility outfielder. We took the field looking as if team tryouts had been held at the Census Bureau. Jamaica remained academically rigorous, and was initiating an impressive array of programs designed to prepare students for careers in science and engineering, business and medicine. It was during my sophomore year, when Eileen Petruzzillo was principal, that the Department of Education cited the school for its excellence.

In my senior year, the father of my friend Sherman Brown encouraged me and a classmate, Mark Mason, to apply to his alma mater, Howard University. Sherman played first base on the baseball team and lived in Jamaica Estates. His father owned a travel agency. His mother, who held a doctorate in psychology, was the first person I'd ever met with a Ph.D. Mark was the senior-class president and, like me, the first in his family for whom going directly from high school to college was a possibility. Sherman, Mark, and I wound up as roommates at Howard. My four closest black friends at Jamaica, including Sherman and Mark, earned master's degrees, and two of them were later awarded doctorates. Mark, now a chief

financial officer at Citigroup, summarized Jamaica's impact: "We came from neighborhoods where very few people went to college, but went to school with a set of people almost certain to go to college, and the school had a bigger influence."

My high-school years had coincided with a train of racially charged events in the city: the death of Eleanor Bumpurs, a sixty-six-year-old woman who was shot in her apartment by a police officer; the death, from injuries sustained in police custody, of the graffiti artist Michael Stewart; the arrest of Bernhard Goetz, in the shooting of four young black men who he claimed had attempted to mug him in the subway; and the death of Michael Griffith, in Howard Beach, Queens. Griffith's death brought a roiling racial subcurrent to the surface: he was fatally struck by a car as he fled onto a highway to escape a mob of whites who were chasing him. Adults in my neighborhood who had grown up in the South called Griffith's death a lynching, and warned me to stay out of white working-class enclaves like Howard Beach. Three days after Griffith's death, I saw a group of black teen-agers attack a white teen-ager on Hillside Avenue, and rage through the streets shouting "Howard Beach! Howard Beach!" Yet neither I nor any of the teachers and alumni I spoke to recall those tensions as being particularly prominent at Jamaica. The school continued to represent an educational idyll. But it could not stand entirely outside the times.

Students usually gathered in the first-floor auditorium before the start of classes, but, on the morning of Wednesday, November 5, 1986, Principal Petruzzillo announced over the P.A. system that the auditorium was off limits, owing to a construction emergency. Her story held up for just as long as it took for the police and ambulances to arrive. Earlier that morning, Gregory Evelyn, an almost fragilely small sixteen-year-old junior, with whom I had taken swimming class, had shot a sophomore named Stanley Pacheco, following what was said to have been a dispute over a girl. Leo Greenfest, a gym teacher certified in first aid, tended to Pacheco, but the bullet had severed his spinal cord, and left him paralyzed below the neck. Evelyn ran

out of the building and was arrested at his home a short time later.

School shootings were not yet recognized as a common feature of American life, which meant that the incident generated an enormous amount of news coverage, and also that there were no established safety or emotional-health protocols with which to respond to it. The shooting and its aftermath hung over us the rest of the school year; for the graduating students, they remained a set of emotional ellipses never quite resolved. Outside the school, the shooting came to be seen as a vector of ill tidings, definitive evidence of an institution in decline. But to the teachers who returned the following year, and the years after, the shooting was a tragedy that presaged the coming violence in American schools more than it spoke to any particular trouble at Jamaica. On the morning of the shooting, Susan Sutera, a gym teacher, was leading a combined class with Leo Greenfest. She continued to teach at the school until the year before it closed. "The shooting was a crazy, tragic day," she told me. "But, terrible as it was, it didn't really define Jamaica as a dangerous place. It was something that we recognized we had to move on from."

As late as 1998, Jamaica held a respectable standing among the city's large high schools. Though it was no longer the élite institution of earlier years, more than seventy-five per cent of the students graduated on time. But, by 2009, the graduation rate had tumbled to thirty-nine per cent. A confluence of events brought about the decline. In that period, talented students in northern Queens were given the option of attending two other high schools, both based on college campuses. In 1995, Townsend Harris, a magnet high school on Parsons Boulevard, moved onto the campus of Queens College. With roughly half the number of students as Jamaica, Townsend Harris had graduation rates that fluctuated between ninety-nine and a hundred per cent. During the eighties and nineties, Jamaica allowed students to enroll in courses at York College, a liberal-arts institution about a mile south of the high school. In 2002, York became the location of Queens High School for the Sciences, which granted admission

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In 2004, in the name of greater choice, the Bloomberg administration revised the districting rules to allow students to attend any high school in the city. Given the realities of residential segregation, and of school quality as a determinant of real-estate values, there was something almost radical in that idea. It's even possible to see the Bloomberg plan as a long-awaited response to Arthur Levitt's claim, in 1954, that the problem in New York was not segregated schools but segregated neighborhoods. But it also meant that students whose parents—owing to language difficulties or work demands, immigration status or a generalized fear of bureaucratic authority—could not or would not pursue other educational options for their children found themselves relegated to increasingly unappealing schools.

The demographic balance that characterized Jamaica during my years became impossible to maintain. In 2011, the year that the city formally decided to close the school, fourteen per cent of the student population had disabilities and twenty-nine per cent had limited English proficiency. In the year before the school closed, it was ninety-nine per cent minority, a demographic that would not in itself be a concern were it not also the case that sixty-three per cent of the students qualified as poor.

James Eterno taught social studies at Jamaica from 1986 until it closed, and was also a representative of the United Federation of Teachers. A trim, voluble man in his fifties, he speaks in a rapid-fire cadence and with precisely the accent you'd expect of someone who'd spent all but two years of his life in Queens. Eterno agrees with Joel Klein's description of the school's enrollment during its last decade. "We still had plenty of smart kids, but we had many more higher-needs kids, English-language learners," he told me. Concentrations of high-needs students place a strain on schools, and, Eterno said, "We didn't get the support. We were not prepared to deal with the changing population." The tacit belief that large schools were unreformable meant that Jamaica's sliding numbers looked to some experts

like predictable educational failure; to the faculty, those numbers looked like what happens when a school is asked to educate a challenging population without the necessary tools. (This is what George Vecsey was referring to when he wrote about "cooking the books.") In the battle over the school's future, many came to see those changing demographics not as happenstance but as a purposeful way of insuring that the creation of small schools in the building would be a fait accompli.

In a way, the protests over school closure are a bookend to the riots that broke out over busing four decades ago. Like "busing" and "integration," the language of today's reformers often serves as a euphemism for poverty mitigation, the implicit goal that American education has fitfully attempted to achieve since *Brown v. Board of Education*. Both busing and school closure recognize the educational obstacles that concentrated poverty creates. But busing recognized a combination of unjust history and policy as complicit in educational failure. In the ideology of school closure, though, the lines of responsibility—of blame, really—run inward. It's not society that has failed, in this perspective. It's the schools.

In 1954, Kenneth and Mamie Clark's arguments about the pernicious effects of racism on black children implicated white society. Sixty years later, arguments that black students associated studiousness with "acting white" were seen not as evidence of the negative effects of internalized racism but as indicators of pathological self-defeat among African-Americans. The onus shifted, and public policy followed. The current language of educational reform emphasizes racial "achievement gaps" and "underperforming schools" but also tends to approach education as if history had never happened. Integration was a flawed strategy, but it recognized the ties between racial history and educational outcomes. Last year, a study by the Civil Rights Project at U.C.L.A. found that New York has the most segregated school system in the country, a reflection of the persistence of the housing patterns that Arthur Levitt talked about in 1954 but also of the failure of the

integrationist ideal that was intended to address it. From that vantage point, the closure of Jamaica seemed to be less about the interment of a single school than about the impeachment of a particular brand of idealism regarding race and, by extension, American education.

Ninety years ago, the City of New York broke ground on a huge, beautiful building as a symbol of its commitment to public education. Last year, it closed the school that the building housed, purportedly for the same reasons. The people who gathered angrily outside Jamaica High School weren't really protesting its closing; they were protesting the complex of history, policy, poverty, and race that had brought it about.

When I visited the old building on Gothic Drive, a few months ago, it was undergoing renovation and was obscured by scaffolding and tarps. It looked as if it were draped in a shroud. Then I drove a mile southeast to my old apartment building in Bricktown. The area had never been beautiful, but now it sagged in a way that it hadn't done in the early eighties, when I lived there. Rows of boarded-up properties lined the street. Our building was now windowless and abandoned. For the first time in many years, I understood myself to be from Bricktown, even as the glare from a man across the street, as subtle as an eviction notice, told me that I no longer belonged there.

Education was central to the gamble at the heart of my parents' migration north. My mother began her adulthood cleaning houses for whites in Alabama; she ended it as a holder of two degrees from New York University—a trajectory that said as much about the possibilities she found in Queens as it did about her own determination. Bricktown's declining fortunes said everything about what is at stake in public education—about what happens when a place like Jamaica ceases to be great and then ceases to be at all. It was obvious that a good portion of the homes in Bricktown had been foreclosed. What was less apparent was that so had a key route—the one I took thirty years ago—to get out of there. ♦

SHOUTS & MURMURS

I ❤ (+LUNG) U

BY PATRICIA MARX



Jean Jullien

My dearest daughter,

If you are reading this, then you understand that I am not going to wake up from my nostril transplant. I realize it must be trying for you to simultaneously become an orphan and find out that Manhattan Eye, Ear, and Throat Hospital does not have a money-back guarantee. Even though I will never again be able to post selfies or latte art on Instagram, do not be sad. Remember, after Daddy died, when you told me that I deserved some "me time"? (Or was that Hilda in the Saks fur department?) My point is, I have had a wonderful life, especially after the death of Daddy, and now it is time to give back. No, not the Oscar de la Renta chinchilla. (Fluffy mauled the collar.) I am talking about re-gifting my body. (Also, Fluffy's.)

Therefore, I direct that after my death my remains be distributed to the countless people in the world who are less fortunate than I, even in my current state.

I would like my eyes (contact lenses included, of course) to be donated to a destitute blind child who aspires to see the Tartan plaid called Royal Stewart. When blessed with sight, the child should agree with me that Renoir is pre-Hallmark trash. The child must be attractive, because, otherwise, what's the point?

My outer ears and cochlea—which have heard the sweet humming of a G5 Learjet and the sound of a baby wailing ceaselessly to be fed—I bequeath to a deaf ward of the state who, like me, can't wear gold earrings of less than eighteen karats, because of pesky allergies.

My nose, irreparable nostrils and all, should go back to Dr. Savadove. As anyone can plainly see, he gave me Bunny Dash's nose when what I wanted was the nose of Delia Manoogian, who, let's not kid ourselves, had copied the proportions from Kay Kling. On second thought: if Bunny wants a backup, it's hers.

Wasn't it Christ who said to turn

in the other cheek? I suppose I am one-upping Him, then, because I would like whatever is left of my face to be sold at an auction to raise money for a 501(c)(3) foundation in my memory that gives away my body parts for tax write-offs. Make sure that somewhere—the new Whitney would be nice—my name is incised on a marble frieze, in lettering no less prominent than that of Koch, Schwarzman, and Geffen.

Also, in the name of medical advancement, shouldn't someone at a foundation study my blood, since it is probably ninety-three per cent artificial sweetener?

Before anyone takes my legs, apply self-tanning lotion. While you're at it, I'd like an eyelash tuck, a chin up, a toe reduction, an elbow peel, a neck twist, a knuckleplasty, and a manicure, all of which should be charged to my estate. Make sure you arrange for the first appointments of the day, because that's when surgeons are most alert.

Have I ever mentioned Forrest, my adorable trainer at SoulCycle? He gets dibs on my brain. Tell the locker-room ladies to show him how to use it.

Let Mr. Marciano, your virile algebra tutor from ninth grade, have my breasts. He paid for them. (Even you can do the math now, sweetie.)

Certainly, compassion and charity toward the afflicted and the distressed are our moral duty (Christ again?), but I hope that you and Joey know how much family meant to me. To the tired, the poor, and the huddled masses yearning to breathe free—and by that I mean Daddy's uncle Howie and aunt Lenore—I return the unused Febreze tabletop air purifier, which is still in the box.

No, precious, I didn't forget you. I gave Joey the money, but would you like my dental veneers? Dr. Ohrstrom said that they have five good years before you'll need to replace them. Remember to use non-abrasive toothpaste and to never eat lingonberries.

One more thing. Promise me that you won't give my intestines to anyone, no matter how needy, who likes clams casino. And don't use my skin-renewal cream. I'm saving it for later.

Sincerely, I was,
Your loving Mother ♦

LETTER FROM TURKEY

THE BIG DIG

Istanbul's city planners have a problem: too much history.

BY ELIF BATUMAN

When it came to choosing the exact location of the first tunnel spanning the Bosphorus—the narrow strait that divides the European and Asian sides of Istanbul and links the Black Sea with the Sea of Marmara—one of the principal considerations was how to avoid encountering any archeological marvels. The tunnel

tually chosen, in the working-class district of Yenikapi, had conveniently spent much of antiquity underwater. In Byzantine times, it was a harbor.

"What's going to turn up in a harbor?" one official explained, when I asked about the decision. "Seabed and sand fill. Architectural structures aren't going to turn up."

trol of the site shifted to the museum, and use of mechanical tools was suspended. From 2005 to 2013, workers with shovels and wheelbarrows extracted a total of thirty-seven shipwrecks. When the excavation reached what had been the bottom of the sea, the archeologists announced that they could finally cede part of the site to the engineers, after one last survey of the seabed—just a formality, really, to make sure they hadn't missed anything. That's when they found the remains of a Neolithic dwelling, dating from around 6000 B.C. It was previously unknown that anyone had lived on the site of the old city before around 1300 B.C. The excavators, attempting to avoid traces of Istanbul's human history, had ended up finding



Byzantine shipwrecks found during the construction of the first-ever tunnel under the Bosphorus held up work for years.

was for a new high-speed train called Marmaray (a combination of "Marmara" and *ray*, the Turkish word for "rail"), connecting to Istanbul's metro system. Of particular concern was the placement of the main station on the European shore, on the site of ancient Byzantium and Constantinople: everything within the ancient city walls has been designated both by UNESCO and by the Turkish government as a historical site, and all digging must be supervised by the Istanbul Archaeological Museum. The location that was even-

In fact, a tiny Byzantine church did turn up in Yenikapi, under the foundations of some razed apartment buildings. But the real problem was the large number of Byzantine shipwrecks that began to surface soon after the excavation began, in 2004. Dating from the fifth to the eleventh century, the shipwrecks illustrated a previously murky chapter in the history of shipbuilding and were exceptionally well preserved, having apparently been buried in sand during a series of natural disasters.

In accordance with Turkish law, con-

an extra five thousand years of it. It took five years to excavate the Neolithic layer, which yielded up graves, huts, cultivated farmland, wooden tools, and some two thousand human footprints, miraculously preserved in a layer of silt-covered mud. In the Stone Age, the water level of the Bosphorus was far lower than it is now; there's a chance that the people who left those prints might have been able to walk from Anatolia to Europe.

Exciting as these discoveries were for archeologists, they did not delight

the Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, who had been championing the tunnel since he was mayor of Istanbul, in the nineteen-nineties. (He has been President since 2014.) Istanbul is one of the world's fastest-growing cities, with a population of more than fourteen million—up from less than a million in 1950—and, according to a recent study, it has the worst traffic in the world. In 2013, at least two million people crossed the Bosphorus daily, by bridge or ferry; the number of motor-vehicle crossings rose eleven hundred and eighty per cent between 1988 and 2012. The tunnel was long overdue.

In 2011, Erdoğan celebrated his fifty-seventh birthday inside the still unfinished tunnel and blamed the construction delays on the archeological discoveries: "Oh, some archeological crockery turned up—oh, some finding turned up," he told the press. "That's how they put obstacles in our path. Are these things really more important than the human?" (In this, as in subsequent remarks on the subject, Erdoğan called the Yenikapı findings *çanak çömlek*: a dismissive term for tableware, generally translated as "pots and pans.") He vowed that there would be no more delays: the train would begin running on October 29, 2013—the ninetieth anniversary of the Republic of Turkey.

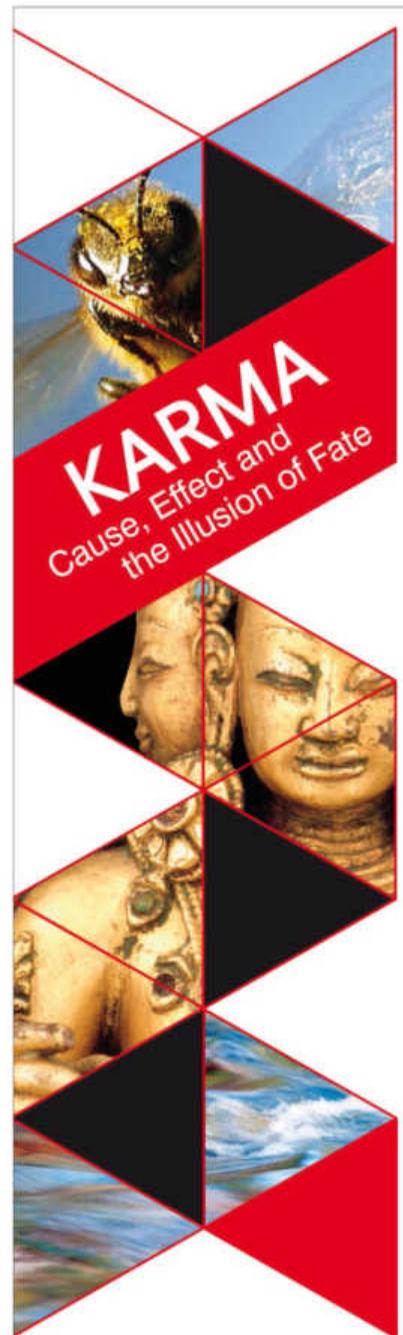
Marmaray did open on October 29th. You can now cross the Bosphorus in four minutes. The connecting metro service at Yenikapı began in 2014. One report estimated that it would save Istanbul's commuters twenty-five million hours a year. An engineer once described the Yenikapı station to me as a knot tying together different kinds of rail transport. It's equally a knot tying together different kinds of time: millennia and minutes, eras and hours. The restoration of the ships, employing a technology first used on Viking galleys, takes anything from five to twenty years. Ufuk Kocababaş, the Istanbul University marine archeologist who started working on the ships in 2005, at the age of thirty-five, and is now in charge of their preservation, doesn't expect to see the job completed in his lifetime. A museum and an archeological park are under construction to showcase the findings, and, in an apt figure for the seemingly endless nature of the Yeni-

kapı project, it seems likely that their construction will turn up even more shipwrecks.

When I first visited the Yenikapı excavation site, in July, 2013, the Marmaray station was already nearly completed—a concrete colossus topped by a flat, glass-enclosed rotunda—but the metro station was still an archeological dig. The total site was fifty-eight thousand square metres, about the size of eleven football fields. Workers on the Marmaray side wore fluorescent hard hats with matching vests. On the metro side, they wore faded caps or white shirts tied around their heads, against the blazing sun. They were constructing an edifice of their own, as striking, in its way, as the station: a fortress of plastic milk crates, ten crates high, stretching farther than the eye could see, packed with broken amphorae, horse bones, anchors, ceramic lamps, hewn limestone, mining refuse—anything that had been left there, accidentally or on purpose, by human hands. It was as if you were watching, in real time, the ancient harbor being replaced by a modern station.

To one side stood an armada of long objects, wrapped in white plastic, resembling monstrously elongated pianos. They turned out to be escalators awaiting installation. The shipwrecks were likewise hidden from view, in long white plastic tents, where sprinklers kept them damp twenty-four hours a day. Wood can absorb eight times its mass in water. If allowed to dry naturally, it cracks and warps beyond recognition.

"This work is like surgery—you can't leave the patient unattended," Ufuk Kocababaş said when we visited the tents together. He had been directing a team there since 2007. During most of the excavation, there were between six hundred and a thousand workers on-site, plus about eighty archeologists and other experts. The ships really did resemble surgical subjects, their rib cages opened up as each was measured, recorded, and documented by graduate students. Archeology, Kocababaş explained, is a destructive science. The site has to be recorded scrupulously, because the excavation will annihilate it. The Yenikapı team used a dronelike electric helicopter to shoot video from above, while a motorized camera on a



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collection of Nevin Kumar; New York; C2003.7.2 (IWAR 88206)



"Hmm, these aren't looking too pretty. I suggest we opt for a Valencia filter."

scaffold took thousands of photographs and stitched them together into high-resolution images. Students traced a full-size outline of each ship on clear acetate.

Two kinds of vessel were found at Yenikapı: long, light scouting ships and shorter, heavier cargo ships, five of which had their original cargo. One ship, double-bottomed and lined with thick tiles, might have been used to carry marble from Marmara Island. Kocabas speculates that the ships found with cargo sank suddenly, during storms or floods, which prevented the crew or the owners from retrieving their lost goods. These disasters would also have sealed the ships' remains in a layer of sand, protecting them from air and from the naval shipworm, a shipwreck-eating species of saltwater mollusk.

Kocabas was particularly excited about the ship known as YK12, which was recovered along with both a large cargo of amphorae and the captain's personal belongings: a mess kit, a brazier, and a large basket of cherry pits. The cherry pits indicated that the ship sank during the relatively brief cherry season—perhaps during one of the summer storms common in the Marmara region. Most of the ships with cargo date from the ninth to the ele-

venth century. There were also fragments of empty cargo ships distributed throughout the harbor. The ships had likely been scuttled and forgotten centuries earlier.

After on-site documentation, the ships were transported to a specially constructed laboratory in the twisted back streets of Yenikapı. In several black rectangular pools, up to thirty metres long, dismembered ship pieces glimmered like eels. Nearby, some workers were easing a waterlogged beam onto a custom-built wooden bracket so that they could move it somewhere else. (Ancient shipwrecks have the soft, friable texture of feta cheese, so you can't just pick them up and carry them.) Dark, slightly twisted, the ancient beam glistened in the sun. Steam rose from the surface, contributing to a faint manure-like smell that hung in the air.

"This is a beautiful piece," Kocabas said. "It's what we call the chin—it's a connector between the stern and the keel. The way it's dovetailed is very interesting—here it's going to lock together. It's a marvellous technology."

Inside the laboratory, a doctoral student was studying a brontosaurus-size rib from ship YK27, one of several ships built using techniques from different historical periods. Ships like YK27 have

shed light on a transition in the history of shipbuilding, from the time-consuming shell-based (outside-in) mode of construction, favored in antiquity, to the more efficient skeleton-based (inside-out) mode that prevailed during the Middle Ages.

This shift was originally believed to have taken place around 1000 A.D. The Yenikapı ships suggest that key elements of skeleton-based construction were already known by the seventh century—long before the shell-based construction was abandoned. In other words, the better technology supplanted the older one only after centuries of experimentation, hybridization, and regional variation. In technology, as in other areas of life, progress often comes about almost by accident, isn't immediately recognized, and only later acquires the appearance of a purposeful step.

In addition to the ships, tens of thousands of museum-worthy objects turned up in the harbor: a fourth-century marble Apollo, an ivory carving of the Virgin Mary, a nineteenth-century emerald necklace that someone had dropped in the harbor. There were beautiful miniature ships—exactly like the shipwrecks but smaller and less wrecked. There was a device that Kocabas described as a "Byzantine tablet computer": a seven-inch wooden notebook with five removable wax pages that could be written on and erased again. The "tablet" had an "app" at the bottom: a sliding compartment concealing a tiny assay balance.

In Yenikapı, I visited the makeshift lab where all of these objects are processed by the Istanbul Archaeological Museum. In one trailer, a group of conservators, all women, were restoring small wooden objects. Reaching into plastic water-filled boxes, they fished out dripping marvels: spoons, tiny spools and pulleys, combs. There was a Byzantine child's sandal sole, and many larger adult soles, gleaming, black, worn out in just the places one's shoes do get worn out. One smallish sole was engraved with birds and bore a Greek inscription: "Wear it in good health, lady."

In a shed nearby, a noisy filtration machine was chugging its way through approximately two thousand sacks of Byzantine and Neolithic dirt. Water



PHOTO BY TAMMY SHELL

gushed and cycled through the machine, pushing the dirt through a filter.

"What turns up in there?" I asked the worker in charge of the machine.

"There could be seeds," he said.

"What else, besides seeds?"

"So far, nothing but seeds." He showed me a number of eight-thousand-year-old seeds, sorted, labelled, and set aside for the archeobotanists.

The most space in the lab was taken up by thousands of milk crates, which were stacked to the roof in the yard and in the hallways. Their contents spilled out onto tables, where some had been neatly arranged into rows: hundreds of lamps, vessels, and plates in terra-cotta and ceramic, many with human or animal faces, with big, startled Byzantine eyes. The museum staff had to process fifteen boxes a day, cleaning, recording, cataloguing, and sorting the contents into three groups: display quality, study quality, and uninteresting. The first two groups would be sent to the museum; the third would be put into sacks and reburied. Contemporary Turkish coins would also be put in the sacks, as a message to future archeologists that the materials had been reburied in the twenty-first century.

Leaving the lab, I passed a colossal embankment of sacks, which I had previously mistaken for a sandbag barricade. Inside, thousands of uninteresting Byzantine artifacts awaited their reburial.

At the veterinary faculty of Istanbul University, on a remote suburban campus out past the airport, there is a small research center devoted to the animal remains uncovered at Yenikapi. Vedat Onar, the archeozoologist responsible for the center, took me on a tour this spring. We entered through a padlocked iron gate, passed the word "osteoarchaeology" spelled out in bones, and eventually came to a narrow hallway lined, from floor to ceiling, with three hundred Byzantine horse skulls. No other archeological site has yielded so many Byzantine horse skulls. A few complete horse skeletons had also been found. I saw one in a photograph, laid out on the ground among the mussel shells. It looked like a constellation.

Byzantine horses were crossbred for height and strength, in the Roman fashion. They started carrying heavy loads at

the age of two, and were controlled by iron bits, which eroded their upper palates, wearing clean through the bone, and eventually making a large hole that connected the mouth and the nose cavity.

"This great stress on the mouth passed to the whole body," Onar explained. Though most of the recovered horses had been younger than ten when they died, they were already beset by skeletal disease: "foot problems, vertebral-column deformities, spondylitis, terrible spinal problems—they couldn't turn right or left." Once the horses could no longer work, they were slaughtered and flayed. When the skins, horsehair, and meat had been taken, the bones were dumped into the harbor. The Byzantines, unlike the Romans, ate horses.

Byzantine written sources had mentioned nobles eating bears and donkeys, but nobody had known whether the stories were true. At Yenikapi, donkey and bear bones were found with unmistakable marks of butchery. Ostrich bones were found, but only the back legs. "That's where all the meat is," Onar explained, pointing at his own leg. People might have eaten the ostrich legs during ship journeys from North Africa. Butchered elephant bones were found, presumably from the circus at the hippodrome. Onar suspects that the thrifty Byzantines had fed the elephants, upon their retirement, to the lions.

From the elephant bones we passed to the skulls of dancing bears. The cubs' skulls showed compression fractures, from having been hit during training. The adult skulls had marks on the muzzles, from having been bound shut. Dancing bears had been a popular Byzantine entertainment. Empress Theodora's father was a bear trainer.

We came to a wall covered with hundreds of Byzantine dog skulls. Onar's partiality to dogs immediately became apparent. As a student, he had researched the dog burials of Urartu, an Iron Age civilization in the Caucasus, where people had been buried in mass graves with large numbers of dogs so that they could all spend the afterlife together. The Byzantines, he said, had stray dogs, watchdogs, and pet dogs (a sign of social status). When I mentioned that I had a cat, he showed me a small number of cat skulls, and assured me that cats were treated better in

the Byzantine Empire than in Western Europe. Gently, as if consoling me for something, he said, “I can tell you this: those cats had no problems that were caused by human hands.” In general, he said, you could tell a lot about a society by the way it treated its animals. I asked what conclusions he had drawn about the Byzantines. “We found a dog with a broken foot, and its foot was set,” he said. “It was treated. The dog didn’t die from that injury. So even the lame dog was fed.”

In April, 2013, Erdoğan drew a telling comparison between the findings at Yenikapı and a controversial new shopping center that he was proposing to build in Gezi Park, near Istanbul’s Taksim Square. The shopping center was to be housed in a replica of an Ottoman barracks that had been destroyed in 1940. At a press conference, a month before the Gezi plan sparked nationwide antigovernment protests, Erdoğan asked why Yenikapı’s Byzantine findings were more worthy of preservation than the Ottoman barracks. “Three or five pots and pans turned up from the bottom of the sea, a spoon turned up, and these have to be preserved,” he said. “But the barracks, which could save Taksim Square, it’s a perfectly good building, architecturally and aesthetically, and this you won’t preserve. If that’s not ideology, what is?”

He was right: archeology is ideology, especially in modern Turkey. Mustafa Kemal, who founded the republic, in 1923, once wrote in a cable to his Prime Minister, “More students should be trained in archeology.” The Ottoman Empire—an entity that at its peak encompassed the Balkans and much of the Caucasus, North Africa, and the Middle East—had recently been dismantled by the Allied Powers, after the catastrophic defeat of the First World War. Woodrow Wilson’s Fourteen Points, asserting the principle of self-determination, was one of many signs that the age of multiethnic empires, such as the Ottoman and the Austro-Hungarian, was giving way to an age of ethnic nation-states. Kemal understood that, if Turkish-speaking Muslims were going to retain

any land in the former Ottoman Empire, they would have to come up with a unifying mythology of Turkishness, based on the Western European ideals of ethnic nationalism, positivism, and secularism. Adopting the surname Atatürk (Father Turk), he quickly set about inventing a new national identity. Of course, it couldn’t seem invented; that’s where archeology came in.

In 1930, Atatürk appointed a committee to establish an ethnohistorical basis for a Turkish state in Anatolia. In 1931, the Society for the Examination of Turkish History published a radical four-volume history of Turkey, propounding the so-called “Turkish-history thesis.” The thesis held that the Turks were

descended from an ancient people who lived around an inland sea in Central Asia, where they basically started civilization all by themselves. At the end of the Ice Age, the sea dried up, propelling waves of Turks to China, India, Mesopotamia, Greece, and Italy, where they intermingled with the native populations and spread their knowledge of metalworking and of domesticated animals. In 5000 B.C., a core group of Turks settled in Anatolia: their second homeland. In a recent article, the historian Clive Foss enumerated other colorful tenets of the theory. In Mesopotamia, “Sumerian Turks” drained swamps and developed a written language; Turkish Thracians founded Troy. Turkish Lydians migrated to Italy, became Etruscans, and so more or less established Rome. The Minoans of Crete, having come from Anatolia, were basically Turks. The Buddha was a Turk; so was the third-century Roman emperor Maximinus.

The theory solved any number of problems. It countered the Allied Powers’ characterization of the Turks as civilization-resistant occupiers of other people’s lands. (“No other race has brought such devastations and massacres, such lasting derangements, into the life of other nations,” a British naval-intelligence publication of the time stated.) By emphasizing a pre-Islamic past, it kept the national identity separate both from the disgraced Ottoman

Empire and from the Muslim caliphate. By making the Turks out to be the ancestors of Western civilization, it allowed the nation to modernize without losing face: to “Westernize” was simply to rediscover a lost patrimony. Perhaps most important, by positing a genetic relationship between the modern Turks and the prehistoric Anatolians, it protected the new republic from territorial claims by the Greeks, the Italians, the Armenians, and the Kurds.

By the logic of the Turkish-history thesis, all prehistoric Anatolian civilizations of unknown origin were determined to be Turkish. Discovering their relics became a matter of national importance, and the emphasis of archeology shifted from the Classical and Hellenistic ruins of the Aegean region to the Neolithic, Hittite, Phrygian, and Iron Age sites of Central Anatolia. Some excavations were led by German archeologists who had fled the Third Reich, and whom Atatürk had invited to Turkish universities. Vast Hittite tombs were excavated. The capital had moved from the Ottomans’ beloved Istanbul to Ankara, in the middle of the Anatolian steppe—within driving distance of the Hittite capital of Hattusha. New state banks were called Sümerbank (Sumerian Bank) and Eti-bank (Hittite Bank). Artifacts from all over Asia Minor were sent to the Museum of Anatolian Civilizations in Ankara, where, as a child, I spent many hours gazing at eyeless ceramic deer and emaciated bronze stags, developing a love of Hittites, that was not totally unrelated to the snack cakes produced by the Eti (Hittite) biscuit company.

Erdoğan, perhaps the most charismatic Turkish leader since Atatürk, rose to power by specifically appealing to those whom the Kemalist narrative excluded, or seemed to exclude: the emerging pious Muslim middle class, working-class Muslims, and Kurds. This approach meant that Erdoğan had to distance himself from Kemalism, without appearing to do so. (Insulting Atatürk is still punishable under Turkish law.) Where Atatürk was ashamed of the Ottomans, Erdoğan championed them. Where Atatürk expanded Ankara’s Anatolian museum, Erdoğan inaugurated a Panorama 1453 Historical Museum in Istanbul, which features a three-hundred-and-sixty-degree painting of the



Ottoman conquest of Constantinople. At the opening ceremony of the Marmaray station, at Yenikapı, Erdoğan quoted Mehmet the Conqueror in Ottoman Turkish, a language drastically modernized under Atatürk. He described the tunnel as the realization of a “hundred-and-fifty-year-old dream,” referring to the first plans for a Bosphorus tunnel, which were drawn up in 1860, under Sultan Abdülmecid I. (The plan, by the French engineer Simon Préault, called for a submerged floating tunnel.)

Erdoğan just isn’t interested in archeology—that’s not where he’s looking for legitimacy. If he’s going to dig a hole in the ground, it’s going to be to develop natural resources or expand public transit, not to find old pots. The old pots thus become objects of political contention. In 2010, a lawyer associated with the Kemalist party the C.H.P.—the rival of Erdoğan’s party, the A.K.P.—launched an investigation into the sacks of archeological material that were being reburied at Yenikapı, and eventually filed a criminal complaint declaring their reburial unlawful. (The Archaeological Museum later confirmed that it had buried sacks of scientifically uninteresting materials and the matter was dropped.) This legal motion didn’t make a lot of practical sense, but it had a certain symbolic logic: if the government was trying to keep something in the ground, dissenters wanted it brought to light.

On a side street near Karaköy, behind a sixteenth-century mosque below the Atatürk Bridge, and abutted by a Genoese rampart, are the Istanbul metro supervision offices of Yüksel Construction. I met there with Esat Tansev, a project director responsible for the Yenikapı-Taksim metro-line extension, the site where the largest number of ships were found. Tansev’s office was spacious and well lit, but the air felt dense—with sunlight, cigarette smoke, the rumble of the A.C. unit, and the ceaseless trilling of a canary named Coşkun (“enthusiastic, overflowing, ebullient”). Tansev became involved with the project in November, 1998, when Yüksel and three other Turkish firms were awarded the contract, for a hundred and fifty million dollars. The construction was supposed to take two and

a half years. Instead, it took fifteen. One of the other companies ran out of money and backed out of the contract.

Tansev told me that it had been known from Byzantine maps that Yenikapı was the site of a harbor, and that archeological discoveries had been expected—not in the tunnel itself, which runs two hundred metres underground, but in the stations. “Sooner or later, a tunnel has to come up,” he said. “When it reaches the surface of the earth, there are historical encounters.”

When asked what he had learned in almost two decades of such encounters, Tansev said that he had been most impressed by what a big difference it made whether you uncovered something Byzantine or Roman. Either would mess up your project, but Byzantine artifacts could eventually be moved. “Roman things can’t be touched,” he said. “With Byzantium, you can find a way around it. But when it comes to Rome—condolences.”

He went on, “At the beginning, we all felt some mutual antipathy with Professor Ufuk and the Archaeology Museum. But after a few months we all saw it wasn’t the thing to do. Now we all have all kinds of friendships.” Tansev also came to feel a kind of collegial

warmth toward his Byzantine forebears, who had faced the same problems as engineers today but with fewer technical resources. He had wondered how they put a pier in the ground without industrial concrete, and had been interested to learn that they made mortar out of lime.

Still, Tansev had been relieved when the excavation reached the seafloor, and felt only mild discomfiture when the archeologists asked to perform a further five-square-metre test excavation: what could they possibly find under the seafloor? When the archeologists called him fifteen days later to say that they had found Neolithic traces, Tansev thought they were joking. “What are the chances?” he marvelled. “In a hundred-thousand-square-metre area, you excavate twenty-five square metres, and then you find something! It’s unheard of! Well, then they explained it to me. Under the seabed, there’s a dark, hard, oily clay. Past that, there’s tar. Under that, what they found was some kind of cultivated topsoil. There were seeds planted in it.”

The dig continued. “They expanded the area, and this time they found graves, they found those footprints, they found a jug,” Tansev said. “They found plants and insects, they found every kind of



“They learn how to say ‘Gracias’ and we’re supposed to be thankful.”



"Now look down."



thing. They dug and found, dug and found. In that way, three years passed.”

The Neolithic footprints, Tansev recalled, hadn’t looked like much at first. “Whoever discovered them deserves praise,” he said. “Of course, now when you go to the museum they’re footprints, clear as day. I said to myself, ‘Five thousand feet walked here, maybe twenty thousand—are we going to collect all of them?’”

He showed me a group photograph taken in August, 2006—forty-odd engineers, officials, architects, and students, dressed variously in suits and hard hats, waving happily at the camera from the tunnel of the Şişhane metro station. None of them knew about the immaculately preserved eight-thousand-year-old footprints that were going to cause them so many problems.

I was unable to find Tansev in the photograph. When he pointed himself out, I felt a pang. He looked so young.

I visited Tansev with my friend Sibel Horada, a conceptual artist whose work often involves urban development and the historical legacy of non-Turkish Istanbul. I first met Sibel in 2012,

stuff comes out that there’s nowhere to put it, and, eventually, you have to just bury it back in the ground.

Tansev seemed moved. He made a few phone calls, and wrote a number on a slip of paper: 83,562—the number of boxes his workers had removed from the site.

Sibel introduced me to her friend Hayri Fehmi Yilmaz, an art historian who worked as a consultant on the metro construction. As with Tansev, his most vivid recollections involved the Neolithic phase. The Neolithic period is when the first nomadic hunter-gatherers began living in settlements and practicing agriculture. In a process that started in the Fertile Crescent around 10,000 B.C. and slowly moved west toward Europe, the human condition underwent changes that we still can’t begin to imagine—in everything from social organization to physiology. Each new site may hold another clue to what happened.

At first, officials had proposed that the entire Neolithic layer be dumped somewhere for the archeologists to sort through: the whole layer had been a bog, so everything must be mixed up in there anyway. The archeologists objected that this wasn’t the case, and that hand excavation was required. One senior official went to Yenikapi and said that all he saw was mud, so why not excavate it with mechanical shovels? Just then, the archeologists discovered the remains of an eight-thousand-year-old forest—nearly sixty trees with their roots spread out—followed by the graves, with human skeletons laid out in fetal-like position between wooden covers, and other human remains in urns. They found three different burial techniques from the same historical period.

When the officials saw the graves, they backed down, and the excavation proceeded by hand. It was then that archeologists found the hut, the pots, the tools, and the footprints. Some of the prints had been left by bare feet, others by wooden slippers. “We had to laugh when we saw them,” Hayri said. “They’re the same wooden slippers we still wear at baths and in mosques.”

Hayri talked about the rules of excavation and the difficulties of getting a construction permit in the old city. Hayri himself has for many years

abstained from expanding the basement of his house; because he lives in a historic district, this relatively small home-improvement project could fall under the purview of the Istanbul Archeological Museum. He made it sound like something out of Kafka. "Archeologists would have to do an excavation in my house," he said. "Who knows how long it would take?"

"Aren't you curious what's under there?" I asked.

"No," he replied promptly. He said that Istanbul homeowners were generally more curious about archeological findings under their neighbors' houses than under their own.

Two years after I saw the ships being excavated, I returned to Istanbul University to see their preservation. Kocabas showed me two once identical blocks of Byzantine wood: one dried in the sun, and the other preserved by the freeze-drying process used on the ships. The sun-dried wood had shrunk to a blackish twisted jerkylike strip. The freeze-dried wood was an airy, lightweight, bone-colored block, restored to its original size and shape.

Before freeze-drying, each piece of wood must be saturated in a forty-five-per-cent solution of polyethylene glycol, a waxy compound that replaces the water inside the cell walls, preventing shrinking or warping. Because the waterlogged wood is too delicate to be dumped straight into a forty-five-per-cent solution, the concentration has to be increased by five-per-cent increments every month or two. Getting all the pieces of a ship to the full concentration can take years. During the actual freeze-drying, which takes from one to four months, the remaining water in the wood freezes solid, and then, under very low pressure, sublimates to a gas, bypassing the liquid phase.

I looked through the round window of the lab's freeze-drying machine. In the gloom inside, distributed among six shelves, pieces of Byzantine ship were entering a new phase of existence. Nearby, in forty-ton tanks, some other pieces were marinating in the solution. The level was up to thirty-five per cent; Kocabas hoped to reach full strength by the end of the year. He seemed more tired than he had two years earlier. He

talked about missing the sea, and about how his son had just turned fourteen; he had been four when the ships were discovered.

I went to the Marmaray station. The crates had vanished. The building itself looked flat, glassy, unremarkable. Most of the impressive concrete structure I had seen earlier was now underground.

Although the shipwreck museum and the archeological park have yet to materialize, there is now a sixty-five-acre "meeting space" alongside the station. Built mostly by dumping a large amount of infill into the Sea of Marmara, the concrete protuberance quickly became known on social media as "the tumor," and has been used almost exclusively for pro-A.K.P. gatherings. The A.K.P. held its first rally there before Erdogan ran for President, in 2014, after he had exhausted his party's term limit as Prime Minister. Newspaper estimates of attendance ranged from hundreds of thousands to more than a million. Erdogan himself said it was two million.

In 2015, an A.K.P. rally called the Feast of Conquest was held at Yenikapi to mark the five-hundred-and-sixty-second anniversary of the Ottoman conquest of Constantinople—one week before the June general elections. In the presence of five hundred and sixty-two historically costumed Ottoman military personnel, Erdogan read from a chapter of the Koran known as the Conquest sura, and spoke of the upcoming elec-



tion as a future "conquest," reenacting the triumph of Mehmet the Conqueror.

The following week, the A.K.P. lost its absolute majority for the first time in thirteen years, and a new party, the H.D.P., passed the ten-per-cent threshold required to win seats in parliament. The H.D.P. is a spinoff of pro-Kurdish and leftist movements that gained momentum from the Gezi protests. Led by a Kurdish human-rights lawyer, it actively solicited female and L.G.B.T.Q. candidates. The party slogan, "Great

Humanity," comes from a poem by Nâzim Hikmet, whom many consider the greatest twentieth-century Turkish poet, though he spent most of his career in prison or in exile because of his Marxist views. "Great Humanity" isn't Hikmet's most subtle work, but there is a certain power in the sweeping panorama and the concrete detail, and in the way that each sentence ends unexpectedly, tripping up against itself:

The great humanity is the deck-passenger
on the ship
third class in the train
on foot on the highway
the great humanity.

On the escalator at Yenikapi, the great humanity wore a tired expression and was often staring at its cell phone. It stepped on your foot, the great humanity. We descended to a cavernous rotunda with a skylight and pillars. High above the turnstiles, a fresco showed two stylized Byzantine slipper soles, resembling exclamation points.

I found myself remembering Erdogan's exasperation: "Are these things really more important than the human?" I remembered, too, how Kocabas had told me that, of all the discoveries at Yenikapi, he was most moved by the Neolithic footprints: because they "directly evoke the man," they tell us something that none of the other objects, even the shipwrecks, can. "They represent the human without mediation," he said. Back in the Stone Age, far fewer things mediated between humans and the world. There were no nations, no third class.

Few find a seat on Marmaray: each carriage accommodates five standing passengers for every seated passenger. Like Neolithic man, I crossed the Bosphorus upright, "on foot on the highway." I went to Asia and back again. I got off at the first European stop: Sirkeci Station, the old terminus of the Orient Express, where the Marmaray platform is connected to the surface of the earth by a twenty-story escalator—the longest in Turkey. Strange questions may pass through your mind as you travel on this escalator. If fifteen houses are built on top of one another, which one is the most important? Whose voices should be heard—those of the living or those of the dead? How can we all fit in this world, and how do we get where we're going? ♦

THE FEARFUL AND THE FRUSTRATED

Donald Trump's nationalist coalition takes shape—for now.

BY EVAN OSNOS

On July 23rd, Donald Trump's red-white-and-navy-blue Boeing 757 touched down in Laredo, Texas, where the temperature was climbing to a hundred and four degrees. In 1976, the *Times* introduced Trump, then a little-known builder, to readers as a "publicity shy" wunderkind who "looks ever so much like Robert Redford," and quoted an admiring observation from the architect Der Scutt: "That Donald, he could sell sand to the Arabs." Over the years, Trump honed a performer's ear for the needs of his audience. He starred in "The Apprentice" for fourteen seasons, cultivating a lordly persona and a squint that combined Clint Eastwood on the high plains and Derek Zoolander on the runway. Once he emerged as the early front-runner for the Republican Presidential nomination, this summer, his airport comings and goings posed a delicate staging issue: a rogue wind off the tarmac could render his comb-over fully erect in front of the campaign paparazzi. So, in Laredo, Trump débuted a protective innovation: a baseball hat adorned with a campaign slogan that he recycled from Ronald Reagan's 1980 run for the White House—"Make America Great Again!" The headwear, which had the rigid façade and the braided rope of a cruise-ship giveaway, added an expeditionary element to the day's outfit, of blazer, pale slacks, golf shoes—well suited for a mission that he was describing as one of great personal risk. "I may never see you again, but we're going to do it," he told Fox News on the eve of the Texas visit.

When Trump announced his candidacy, on June 16th, he vowed to build a two-thousand-mile-long wall to stop Mexico from "sending people that have lots of problems." He said, "They're bringing drugs. They're bringing crime. They're rapists. And some, I assume, are good people." Three of the statements had no basis in fact—the crime rate

among first-generation immigrants is lower than that for native-born Americans—but Trump takes an expansive view of reality. "I play to people's fantasies," he writes in "The Art of the Deal," his 1987 memoir. "I call it truthful hyperbole. It's an innocent form of exaggeration—and a very effective form of promotion."

Trump's campaign announcement was mocked and condemned—and utterly successful. His favorability among Republicans leaped from sixteen per cent to fifty-seven per cent, a greater spike than that of any other candidate's début. Immigration became the centerpiece of his campaign. "Donald Trump has changed the entire debate on immigration," Rush Limbaugh told his listeners last month. As the climax of events in Las Vegas and Phoenix, Trump brought onstage Jamiel Shaw, Sr., whose seventeen-year-old son was killed, in 2008, by a man who was in the country illegally. Trump stood by while Shaw told the crowd how his son was shot.

Before departing for Laredo, Trump said, "I've been invited by border patrols, and they want to honor me, actually, thousands and thousands of them, because I'm speaking up." Though Trump said "border patrols," the invitation had in fact come from a local branch of the border-patrol union, and the local, after consulting with headquarters, withdrew the invitation a few hours before Trump arrived, on the ground that it would not endorse political candidates. Descending the airplane stairs, Trump looked thrilled to be arriving amid a controversy; he waded into a crowd of reporters and described the change of plans as the handiwork of unspecified enemies. "They invited me, and then, all of a sudden, they were told, *silencio!* They want silence." Asked why he felt unsafe in Laredo—which has a lower crime rate than New York City or Washington, D.C.—he invoked another "they": "Well,

they say it's a great danger, but I have to do it. I love the country. There's nothing more important than what I'm doing."

Trump was now going to meet with city officials instead of with the union. He disappeared into one of seven S.U.V.s, escorted by a dozen police vehicles—a larger motorcade than Mitt Romney merited as the Republican nominee. He passed shopping malls, churches, and ranch houses with satellite dishes in the front yard. Some drivers waved; others stared. A car had been positioned along the route with a sign across the windshield: "MR. TRUMP, FUCK U."

He reached the World Trade Bridge, a trucking link to Mexico, where he stepped inside an air-conditioned building for a half-hour briefing. He emerged to talk to reporters, and, after pausing to let the cameras set up, resumed his event. He was asked, "You keep saying that there's a danger, but crime along the border is down. What danger are you talking about?"

Trump gave a tight, concerned nod. "There's great danger with the illegals, and we were just discussing that. But we have a tremendous danger along the border, with the illegals coming in."

"Have you seen any evidence here to confirm your fears about Mexico sending its criminals across the border?"

Another grave nod. "Yes, I have, and I've heard it, and I've heard it from a lot of different people."

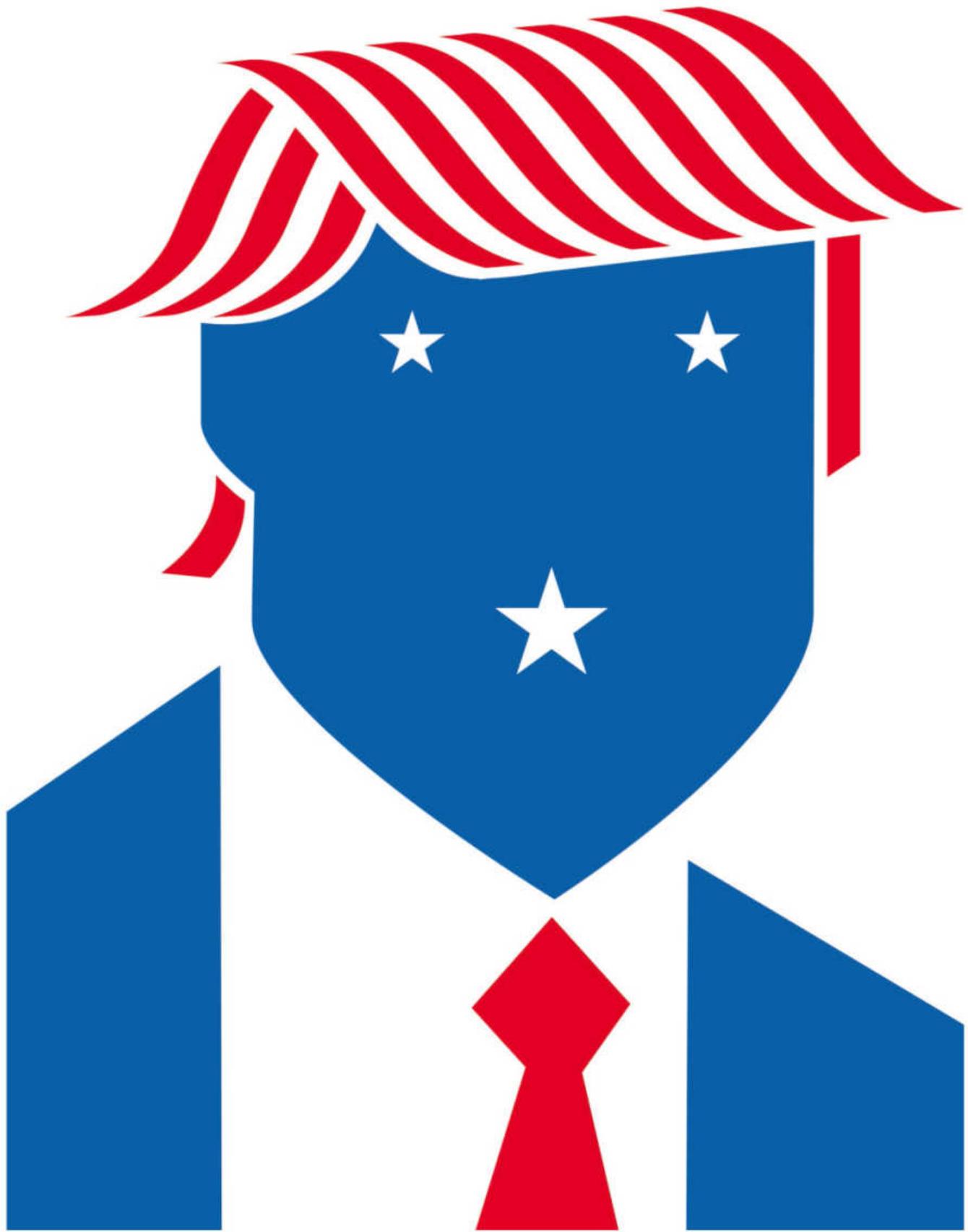
"What evidence, specifically, have you seen?"

"We'll be showing you the evidence." "When?"

He let that one pass.

"What do you say to the people on the radio this morning who called you a racist?"

"Well, you know, we just landed, and there were a lot of people at the airport, and they were all waving American flags, and they were all in favor



Plumbing Trump's psyche is as productive as asking American Pharoah why he runs. The point is what happens when he does.



of Trump and what I'm doing." He shrugged—an epic, arms-splayed shrug.

"They were chanting against you."
"No, they were chanting for me."

"What would you do with the eleven million undocumented immigrants who are already here?"

"The first thing we have to do is strengthen our borders, and after that we're going to have plenty of time to talk about that." He thanked everyone and retreated to the S.U.V.s.

On the way back to the airport, Trump stopped at the Paseo Real Reception Hall, where his supporters had assembled a small rally; guests were vetted at the door to keep out protesters. I sat beside a Latino family and asked the father what had attracted him to the event. He said that a friend involved in the border patrol had called him and asked him "to take up the spaces." He'd brought five relatives. I asked what he thought of Trump's politics. He paused and said, "I like his hotels." Trump told the group, "I don't think that people understand the danger that you're under and the talent that you have. But I understand it." When he opened the floor to questions, José Diaz-Balart, an anchor for Telemundo and MSNBC, said, "Many feel that what you said, when you said that people that cross

the border are rapists and murderers—"

Trump cut him off: "No, no, no! We're talking about illegal immigration, and everybody understands that. And you know what? That's a typical case of the press with misinterpretation." His supporters jeered at the reporter, and Trump shouted over the jeers: "Telemundo should be ashamed!"

Diaz-Balart said, "Can I finish?"

"No, no. You're finished," Trump said. He did his thank-yous, flashed thumbs-up signs, and headed for his airplane.

What accounts for Donald Trump's political moment? How did a real campaign emerge from a proposition so ludicrous that an episode of "The Simpsons" once used a Trump Presidency as the conceit for a dystopian future? The candidate himself is an unrewarding source of answers. Plumbing Trump's psyche is as productive as asking American Pharaoh, the winner of the Triple Crown, why he runs. The point is what happens when he does.

In New Hampshire, where voters pride themselves on being unimpressed, Fred Rice, a Republican state representative, arrived at a Trump rally in the beach town of Hampton on an August evening, and found people waiting patiently in a two-hour line that stretched

a quarter of a mile down the street. "Never seen that at a political event before," he said. Other Republicans offer "canned bullshit," Rice went on. "People have got so terribly annoyed and disenchanted and disenfranchised, really, by candidates who get up there, and all their stump speeches promise everything to everyone." By the night's end, Rice was sold. "I heard echoes of Ronald Reagan," he told me, adding, "If I had to vote today, I would vote for Trump."

To inhabit Trump's landscape for a while, to chase his jet or stay behind with his fans in a half-dozen states, is to encounter a confederacy of the frustrated—less a constituency than a loose alliance of Americans who say they are betrayed by politicians, victimized by a changing world, and enticed by Trump's insurgency. Dave Anderson, a New Hampshire Republican who retired from United Parcel Service, told me, "People say, 'Well, it'd be nice to have another Bush.' No, it wouldn't be nice. We had two. They did their duty. That's fine, but we don't want this Bush following what his brother did. And he's not coming across as very strong at all. He's not saying what Trump is saying. He's not saying what the issues are."

Trump's constant talk of his money, his peering down on the one per cent (not to mention the ninety-nine), has helped him to a surprising degree. "I love the fact that he wouldn't be owing anybody," Nancy Merz, a fifty-two-year-old Hampton Republican, told me. She worked at a furniture company, she said. "But the industry went down the tubes." Her husband, Charlie, used to build household electricity meters at a General Electric plant, until the job moved to Mexico. Now he parks cars at a hospital. Trump, in his speech, promised to stop companies from sending jobs abroad, and the Merzes became Trump Republicans. They are churchgoers, but they don't expect Trump to become one, and they forgive his unpriestly comments about women. "There are so many other things going on in this country that we've got to be concerned about," Nancy said. "I've seen a lot of our friends lose their houses."

Trump's fans project onto him a vast range of imaginings—about toughness, business acumen, honesty—from a continuum that ranges from economic and

libertarian conservatives to the far-right fringe. In partisan terms, his ideas are riven by contradiction—he calls for mass deportations but opposes cuts to Medicare and Social Security; he vows to expand the military but criticizes free trade—and yet that is a reflection of voters’ often incoherent sets of convictions. The biggest surprise in Trump’s following? He “made an incredible surge among the Tea Party supporters,” according to Patrick Murray, who runs polling for Monmouth University. Before Trump announced his candidacy, only twenty per cent of Tea Partiers had a favorable view of him; a month later, that figure had risen to fifty-six per cent. Trump became the top choice among Tea Party voters, supplanting (and opening a large lead over) Senator Ted Cruz, of Texas, and Governor Scott Walker, of Wisconsin, both Tea Party stalwarts. According to a Washington Post/ABC News poll conducted last month, the “broad majority” of Trump’s supporters hailed from two groups: voters with no college degree, and voters who say that immigrants weaken America. By mid-August, Trump was even closing in on Hillary Clinton. CNN reported that, when voters were asked to choose between the two, Clinton was leading fifty-one per cent to forty-five.

In Hampton, I dropped by Fast Eddie’s Diner for the breakfast rush. “He has my vote,” Karen Mayer, a sixty-one-year-old human-resources manager, told me. Already? “Already,” she said. Her husband, Bob Hazelton, nodded in agreement. I asked what issue they cared about more than any other. “Illegal immigration, because it’s destroying the country,” Mayer said. I didn’t expect that answer in New Hampshire, I remarked. She replied, “They’re everywhere, and they are sucking our economy dry.” Hazelton nodded again, and said, “And we’re paying for it.”

When the Trump storm broke this summer, it touched off smaller tempests that stirred up American politics in ways that were easy to miss from afar. At the time, I happened to be reporting on extremist white-rights groups, and observed at first hand their reactions to his candidacy. Trump was advancing a dire portrait of immigration that partly overlapped with their own.

On June 28th, twelve days after Trump’s announcement, the Daily Stormer, America’s most popular neo-Nazi news site, endorsed him for President: “Trump is willing to say what most Americans think: it’s time to deport these people.” The Daily Stormer urged white men to “vote for the first time in our lives for the one man who actually represents our interests.”

Ever since the Tea Party’s peak, in 2010, and its fade, citizens on the American far right—Patriot militias, border vigilantes, white supremacists—have searched for a standard-bearer, and now they’d found him. In the past, “white nationalists,” as they call themselves, had described Trump as a “Jew-lover,” but the new tone of his campaign was a revelation. Richard Spencer is a self-described “identitarian” who lives in Whitefish, Montana, and promotes “white racial consciousness.” At thirty-six, Spencer is trim and preppy, with degrees from the University of Virginia and the University of Chicago. He is the president and director of the National Policy Institute, a think tank, co-founded by William Regnery, a member of the conservative publishing family, that is “dedicated to the heritage, identity, and future of European people in the United States and around the world.” The Southern Poverty Law Center calls Spencer “a suit-and-tie version of the white supremacists of old.” Spencer told

me that he had expected the Presidential campaign to be an “amusing freak show,” but that Trump was “refreshing.” He went on, “Trump, on a gut level, kind of senses that this is about demographics, ultimately. We’re moving into a new America.” He said, “I don’t think Trump is a white nationalist,” but he did believe that Trump reflected “an unconscious vision that white people have—that their grandchildren might be a hated minority in their own country. I think that scares us. They probably aren’t able to articulate it. I think it’s there. I think that, to a great degree, explains the Trump phenomenon. I think he is the one person who can tap into it.”

Jared Taylor, the editor of *American Renaissance*, a white-nationalist magazine and Web site based in Oakton, Virginia, told me, in regard to Trump, “I’m sure he would repudiate any association with people like me, but his support comes from people who are more like me than he might like to admit.”

From the beginning of the current race, the conservative establishment has been desperate for Trump to be finished. After he disparaged the war record of Senator John McCain, the New York Post gave him a front-page farewell—“DON VOYAGE”—and a Wall Street Journal editorial declared him a “catastrophe.” But Trump carried on—in part because he had activated segments of the electorate that other candidates



“He moved to Berlin to pursue something creative he would be bad at here.”

could not, or would not. On July 20th, three days before his trip to Texas, Ann Coulter, whose most recent book is “¡Adios, America! The Left’s Plan to Turn Our Country Into a Third World Hellhole,” appeared on Sean Hannity’s show and urged fellow-Republicans to see Trump’s summer as a harbinger. “The new litmus test for real conservatives is immigration,” she said. “They used to say the same thing about the pro-life Republicans and the pro-gun Republicans, and, ‘Oh, they’re fringe and they’re tacky, and we’re so embarrassed to be associated with them.’ Now every one of them comes along and pretends they’d be Reagan.”

From the pantheon of great demagogues, Trump has plucked some best practices—William Jennings Bryan’s bombast, Huey Long’s wit, Father Charles Coughlin’s mastery of the airwaves—but historians are at pains to find the perfect analogue, because so much of Trump’s recipe is specific to the present. Celebrities had little place in American politics until the 1920 Presidential election, when Al Jolson and other stars from the fledgling film industry endorsed Warren Harding. Two decades ago, Americans were less focussed on paid-for politicians, so Ross Perot, a self-funded billionaire candidate, did not derive the same benefit as Trump from the perception of independence.

Trump’s signature lines—“The American dream is dead” and “We don’t have victories anymore”—constitute a bitter mantra in tune with a moment when the share of Americans who tell Gallup pollsters that there is “plenty of opportunity” has dropped to an unprecedented fifty-two per cent; when trust in government has reached its lowest level on record, and Americans’ approval of both major parties has sunk, for the first time, below forty per cent. Matthew Heimbach, who is twenty-four, and a prominent white-nationalist activist in Cincinnati, told me that Trump has energized disaffected young men like him. “He is bringing people back out of their slumber,” he said.

Ordinarily, the white-nationalist Web sites mock Republicans as Zionist stooges and corporate puppets who have opened the borders in order to keep wages low. But, on July 9th, VDARE,

an opinion site founded to “push back the plans of pro-Amnesty/Immigration Surge politicians, ethnic activists and corrupt Big Business,” hailed Trump as “the first figure with the financial, cultural, and economic resources to openly defy elite consensus. If he can mobilize Republicans behind him and make a credible run for the Presidency, he can create a whole new media environment for patriots to openly speak their mind without fear of losing their jobs.” The piece was headlined “WE ARE ALL DONALD TRUMP NOW.”

Trump’s admirers hear in his words multiple appeals. Michael Hill heads the Alabama-based League of the South, a secessionist group that envisions an independent Southern republic with an “Anglo-Celtic” leadership. In 1981, Hill began teaching history at Stillman College, a historically black college in Tuscaloosa. He applied for jobs at other schools, and was turned down, which he attributes to affirmative action. In 1994, he co-founded the League, which put him at odds, he said, with “civil-rights-

SOME SAY

Some say a host
of horsemen, a horizon
of ships under sail
is most beautiful &
some say a mountain
embraced by the clouds &
some say the badass
booty-shakin’ shorties
in the club are most
beautiful and some say
the truth is most
beautiful dutifully singing
what beauty might
sound under stars
of a day. I say
what they say
is sometimes
what I say
Her legs long
and bare shining
on the bed the hair
the small tuft
the brown languor
of a long line

age, older black faculty and administrators, looking down their nose at this uppity white boy coming out here, talking about the Confederate flag and all that kind of stuff.” In 1999, he left Stillman. He told me, “If academia is not for me, because of who I am—a white Southern male, Christian, straight, whatever—then I’m going to find something that is. I’m going to fight this battle for my people.” Hill was moved by Trump’s frequent references to Kathryn Steinle, a thirty-two-year-old woman who, on July 1st, was walking with her father on a pier in San Francisco when she was fatally wounded in what police described as a random shooting. When police arrested Juan Francisco Lopez-Sanchez, a repeat felon who had been deported from the United States five times, Trump adopted the story of “that beautiful woman” as “another example of why we must secure our border immediately.” Hill told me, “That struck such a nerve with people, because a lot of this political stuff is abstract, but, as a father, I’ve got a daughter as well, and I could just see myself holding my daughter, and her looking

of sunlit skin I say
whatever you say
I'm saying is beautiful
& whither truth beauty
and whither whither
in the weather of an old day
suckerpunched by a spiral
of Arctic air blown
into vast florets of ice
binding the Great Lakes
into a single cracked sheet
the airplanes fly
unassuming over O they eat
and eat the steel mouths
and burn what the earth
spun eons to form
Some say calamity
and some catastrophe
is beautiful Some say
porn Some jolie laide
Some say beauty
is hanging there at a dank bar
with pretty and sublime
those sad bitches left behind
by the horsemen

—Maureen N. McLane

up at me and saying, ‘Help me, Daddy.’” Hill, who condemns immigration and interracial marriage and warns of the influence of “Jewry,” said, “I love to see somebody like Donald Trump come along. Not that I believe anything that he says. But he is stirring up chaos in the G.O.P., and for us that is good.”

I joined Hill at a League of the South meeting one afternoon in July, at its newly built headquarters, on a couple of verdant acres outside Montgomery, Alabama. It was the League’s annual conference, and there were about a hundred men and women; the older men were in courtly suits or jackets, and the younger set favored jeans, with handguns holstered in the waistband. The vendors’ tables had books (“The True Selma Story,” “Authentic History of the Ku Klux Klan”), stickers (“The Federal Empire Is Killing the American Dream”), and raffle tickets. The prize: a .45-calibre Sig Sauer pistol.

After years of decline, the League has recently acquired a number of younger members, including Brad Griffin, a thirty-four-year-old who writes an in-

fluent blog under the name Hunter Wallace. Short and genial, he wore Top-Siders, khaki shorts, and a polo shirt. As we talked, Griffin’s eyes wandered to his two-year-old son, who was roaming nearby. Griffin told me that he embraced white nationalism after reading Patrick Buchanan’s “Death of the West,” which argued, in Griffin’s words, that “all of the European peoples were dying out, their birthrates were low, and you had mass immigration and multiculturalism.” Griffin once had high hopes for the Tea Party. “They channelled all that rage into electing an impressive number of Republicans in the South, but then all they did was try to cut rich Republicans’ taxes and make life easier for billionaires!” he said. “It was all hijacked, and a classic example of how these right-wing movements emerge, and they’re misdirected into supporting the status quo.”

Griffin had recently told his readers that his opinion of Donald Trump was “soaring.” He sees Trump’s surge as a “hostile takeover of the Republican Party. He’s blowing up their stage-managed dog-and-pony show.” Griffin is repelled

by big-money politics, so I asked why he spoke highly of Trump. “He’s a billionaire, but all of these other little candidates are owned by their own little billionaires.” He mentioned Sheldon Adelson and the Koch brothers. “So I think Trump is independent.”

The longer I stayed, the more I sensed that my fellow-attendees occupied a parallel universe in which white Americans face imminent demise, the South is preparing to depart the United States, and Donald Trump is going to be President. When Hill took the stage, he told his compatriots that the recent lowering of the Confederate flag was just the beginning. Soon, he warned, adopting the unspecified “they,” they will come for the “monuments, battlefields, parks, cemeteries, street names, even the dead themselves.” The crowd was on its feet, cheering him on. “This, my friends, is cultural genocide,” he said, adding, “Often, as history has shown, cultural genocide is merely a prelude to physical genocide.” I ducked out to catch a flight to Des Moines: Trump was speaking the next day in Iowa.

The “Make America Great Again Rally and Family Picnic” in Oska-loosa (population: 11,463) opened at eleven, but by ten there was already a crowd of thirteen hundred people—almost twice the capacity of the auditorium. The buffet was serving free pulled-pork sandwiches, and Trump’s warmup act, Tana Goertz (runner-up, “The Apprentice,” Season 3), told the crowd, “Please go eat! Mr. Trump can’t take all this food home on the plane!”

It must be stated clearly that (to the delight of the far-right extremists I spoke with) a great many Republicans are mortified by Trump—horrified by his campaign of fear, embarrassed that others in the Party are not, and desperate to move on. But Trump’s strategy has its logic. Gary Johnson, who as a Republican served two terms as the governor of New Mexico, before becoming the 2012 Libertarian Party Presidential candidate, told me that anyone who runs for office discovers that some portion of the electorate is available to be enraged and manipulated, if a candidate is willing to do it. “I ran across this constantly,” he said. “This eight per cent out there that bangs their fist on the table and

says, ‘The biggest problem we’re facing is immigration!’ And I’m going, ‘No! No! This is not the case!’” Johnson cited a poll that at that point put Trump’s support among Republicans at eighteen per cent, and told me, “I don’t think there’s an eighteen-per-cent element of this country that is just outright racist. But there is a segment out there that is, and he has definitely appealed to that.” Most people, in Johnson’s view, are animated by other parts of Trump’s pitch—“that he’s going to get in and make the tough deals, and nobody’s going to screw with him, because he’ll drop bombs.” That coalition—the fearful and the frustrated—is powerful. “That’s how you begin to get to eighteen per cent,” Johnson said.

As people turned up in Oskaloosa, I encountered some of the fearful. A construction worker named Ron James, wearing a T-shirt that said “Every Juan Illegal Go Home,” told me that the “invasion of illegals” is eroding American culture: “We’re getting flushed down the toilet.” But the vast majority of the room, as best I could tell, was more like Stephanie DeVolder, an elegant fifty-something, with blond hair and bright-green eyes, who had worked as a sales rep for Dice, a job-search site. She was glad that Trump had “brought up the horrific treatment of the veterans,” and that “he is a foremost believer in the military,” and she admired his work on television. “I bought the videos of ‘The Apprentice,’ and watched the whole thing,” she said. “He is a phenomenal judge of character, and he actually does have a heart. He is absolutely amazing.” His fame had guided her to his political views, and, in time, she had concluded that he was “absolutely right about border security.”

Emerging from the wings, in a navy suit, a white shirt, and a pink tie, Trump paused midway across the stage to spread his arms in a gesture of astonished, grateful embrace. For years, Trump has been compared to P.T. Barnum, but the comparison doesn’t capture his range; on the campaign trail, he is less the carnival barker than the full cast—the lion, the fire-eater, the clown with the seltzer—all trussed into a single-breasted Brioni suit. Music from the “Karate Kid”

soundtrack blared—“You’re the best around! Nothing’s gonna ever keep you down!”—and, for a moment, Trump looked genuinely startled by the ardor of the stargazers in the crowd. At the lectern, he said, “It’s a terrific place, Iowa.” Then he monologued for an hour, off the cuff, on Hillary Clinton’s private e-mail server (“What she did is very criminal”); Scott Walker (“Finally, I can attack!”); the Veterans Administration

(“the most corrupt group of people in all of Washington”).

As always, he created a powerful set piece about Mexican criminals who are allowed to “roam around, shooting people and killing people,” as he put it. He described this as a hidden scourge: “Such a big problem, and nobody wants to talk about it.” He reminded the crowd of his trip to Laredo: “I told the pilots, I said, ‘Fly a little bit away from the border, please. Fly a little bit inland.’ It’s a whole scary thing.” He said that when he returned to New York his wife had greeted him in tears. “You made it safely from the border!” she cried. As always, he spoke of Kathryn Steinle’s murder—“Kate, beautiful Kate”—and of the death of Jamiel Shaw’s son, “shot by an animal, an animal that shouldn’t have been in this country.” He urged Iowans to be afraid, even if they didn’t see the threat. “When you’re afraid to walk into your own country, it’s pretty bad,” he said. “Hard to believe. You don’t have that problem in Iowa, in all fairness. But it’s pretty rough out there.”

Over the years, Trump has rejected the suggestion that he is a “belligerent, loudmouthed racist,” as Paul Krugman, the *Times* columnist, put it recently. “I have a great relationship with the blacks,” Trump said on the radio, in 2011.

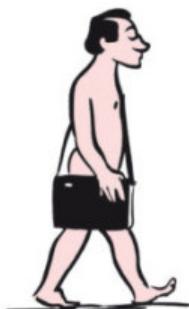
Trump has always weaved in and out of racially charged controversies. In 2000, he secretly ran ads opposing a Catskills casino backed by the St. Regis Mohawk Tribe, because it would rival his businesses in Atlantic City. Beneath a picture of drug paraphernalia, the ad asked, “Are these the new neighbors we want?” Tribal leaders denounced the message as “racist and inflammatory,” and Trump

and his associates were fined by New York State for concealing the true source of the ads. In March, 2011, Trump, who was considering a Presidential run, resurrected the crackpot theory that Barack Obama is not an American citizen, declaring, “I want him to show his birth certificate.” (It had already been publicly available for more than three years.) Trump’s declaration gave the issue new prominence. At the time, Trump’s on-again, off-again political adviser, the former Nixon aide Roger Stone, said that the decision to become a birther was “a brilliant base-building move.”

Trump’s phantasmagorical visions of marauding immigrants are part of a genre in which immigration and race are intermingled. In recent years, hoaxes and theories that were once confined to the margins have been laundered through mainstream media outlets. In 2013, Fox News repeatedly broadcast warnings about the “knockout game,” based on a self-published book by the white nationalist Colin Flaherty, which described black men randomly attacking white pedestrians. In a study published in the journal *Race & Class*, Mike King, a sociologist at SUNY-Oneonta, searched for a single actual case of the knockout game and found none. The news reports were largely patched together from unrelated viral videos of street violence. Bureau of Justice statistics show, King wrote, a “marked decrease in random assaults, including black assaults on white strangers.”

When Trump started emphasizing the mortal threat posed by undocumented immigration, America’s white nationalists rejoiced. “Why are whites supposed to be happy about being reduced to a minority?” Jared Taylor, of *American Renaissance*, asked me. “It’s clear why Hispanics celebrate diversity: More of us! More Spanish! More *cucaracha!*”

Taylor, who calls himself a “racial dissident,” was slim and decorous in gray trousers and a button-down when we met. For years, he and others have sensed an opportunity on the horizon to expand their ranks. When Obama was elected in 2008, Stormfront, the leading white-supremacist Web forum, crashed from heavy traffic. The Klan, weakened by lawsuits and infighting, barely exists anymore, but the Internet



draws in young racists like Dylann Roof, who is accused of the June 17th massacre of nine people at a church in Charleston. The attack inspired a broad effort to remove the Confederate flag—from the state capitol and from the shelves of Amazon and of Walmart and a host of other retail stores. Defenders of the flag were galvanized, and they organized more than a hundred rallies around the South, interpreting the moment, months after racial unrest in Ferguson and Baltimore, as a sign of a backlash against political correctness and multiculturalism. Trump's language landed just as American hate groups were more energized than at any time in years. Griffin, the blogger for the League of the South, told me that the removal of the flag had crystallized "fears that people have about what happens when we become a minority. What happens when we have no control over things? You're seeing it play out right now."

Over sandwiches in the dining room of Taylor's brick Colonial, with views of a spacious back yard, a half-hour from downtown Washington, D.C., five of his readers and friends shared their views on race and politics, on the condition that I not use their full names. They were white men, in white-collar jobs, and each had a story of radicalization: Chris, who wore a pink oxford shirt and a tie, and introduced himself as an employee of "Conservativism, Inc.," the Republican establishment, said that he had graduated from a public high school where there were frequent shootings, but he felt he was supposed to "ignore the fact that we were not safe on a day-to-day basis because of all of these blacks and the other immigrants in our schools."

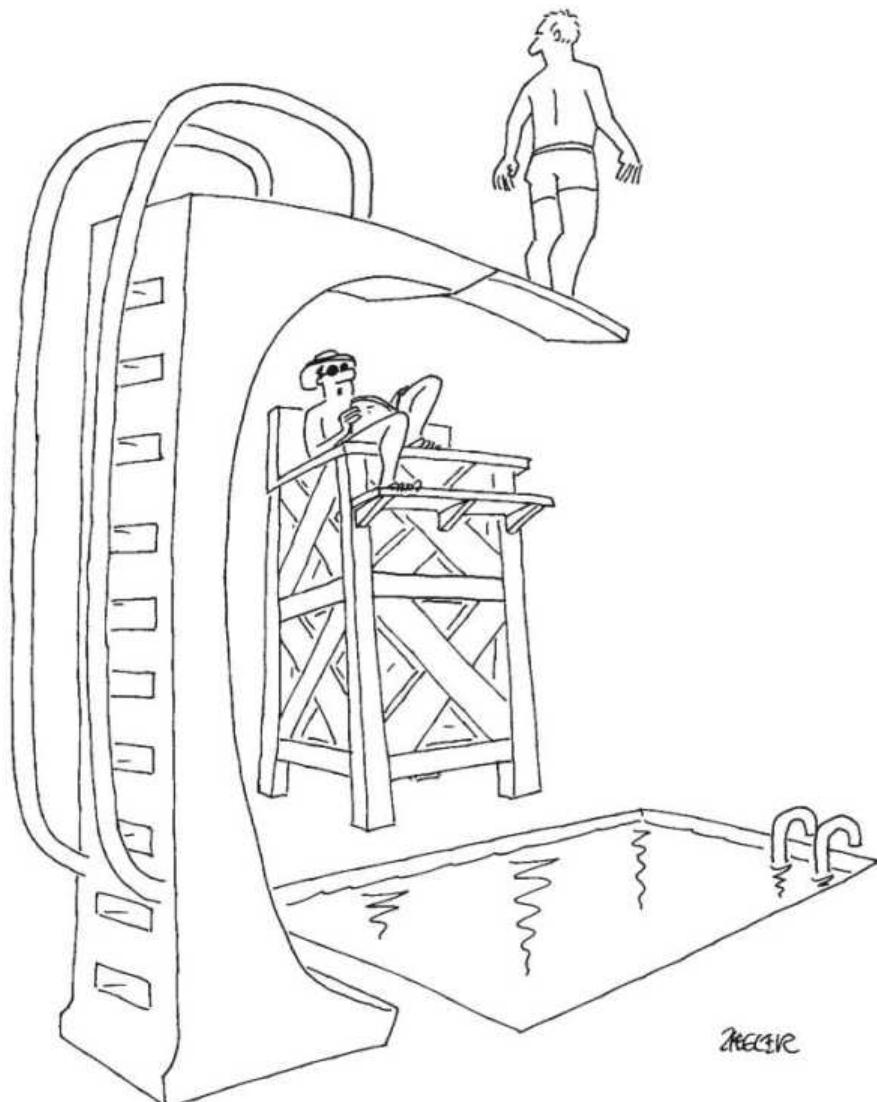
Jason, a muscle-bound commercial-real-estate broker in a polo shirt, said, "I've had personnel—in strict, frightened confidence—just tell me, 'Hey, look, we're just hiring minorities, so don't appeal, don't come back.'" This sense of "persecution," as he called it, is widely held. In a study published in 2011, Michael Norton, a professor at Harvard Business School, and Samuel Sommers, a professor of psychology at Tufts, found that more than half of white Americans believe that whites have replaced blacks as "the primary

victims of discrimination" today, even though, as Norton and Sommers write, "by nearly any metric—from employment to police treatment, loan rates to education—statistics continue to indicate drastically poorer outcomes for Black than White Americans."

The men around the table, unlike previous generations of white nationalists, were inspired not by nostalgia for slavery but by their dread of a time when non-Hispanic whites will no longer be the largest demographic group in America. They uniformly predicted a violent future. Erick, who wore a Captain America T-shirt and unwittingly invoked one of Trump's signature phrases, told me, "The American dream is dead, and the American nightmare is just beginning. I believe it's that way. I think that whites don't know the terror that's upon us."

All the men wanted to roll back anti-discrimination laws in order to restore restrictive covenants and allow them to carve out all-white enclaves. Henry, a twenty-six-year-old with cropped blond hair, said, "We all see some hope in Donald Trump, because it's conceivable that he could benefit the country in a way that we feel would be helpful."

In early August, the Republican candidates convened in Cleveland for their first debate. I watched it on television with Matthew Heimbach, the young white nationalist in Cincinnati, and some of his friends. Heimbach, whom anti-racist activists call "the Little Fuhrer," for his tirades against "rampant multiculturalism," founded the Traditionalist Youth Network, a far-right group that caters to high-school and



"Of course it's not safe. That's why I'm here."

college students and pushes for the separation of blacks and whites. Stocky and bearded, Heimbach is ambitious. He graduated, in 2013, from Towson University, in Maryland, where he attracted controversy for forming a “white student union.” He has met with European Fascists, including members of the Golden Dawn, in Greece.

Heimbach rents part of a house on a placid side street and works as a landscaper. He and his wife recently had their first child, a boy named Nicholas. When I asked Heimbach how he got involved with Fascist politics, he laughed. “I was not raised like this,” he said. “I was raised to be a normal small-town Republican.” The son of teachers in Poolesville, Maryland, an hour from Washington, he, like Brad Griffin, credited Buchanan’s book “Death of the West” for seeding his conception of a desolate future. “Even if you play the game, even if you do everything right, then the future, when it comes to your income, when it comes to benefits, when it comes to everything, we are going to be the first generation in American history to be living worse than our parents.” He went on, “My own parents tell me, ‘Well, you should just shut up, you should go get a normal job, and get a two-car garage, and then you’ll be happy.’”

On the economics, Heimbach’s narrative is not wrong. During a half-century of change in the American labor market—the rise of technology and trade, the decline of manual labor—nobody has been hit harder than low-skilled, poorly educated men. Between 1979 and 2013, pay for men without a college degree fell by twenty-one per cent in real terms; for women with similar credentials, pay rose by three per cent, thanks partly to job opportunities in health care and education. Like many ultraconservatives, Heimbach had largely given up on the Republican Party. He said, “We need to get the white community to actually start speaking for the white community, instead of letting a bunch of Republicans that hate us anyway, and don’t speak for our values, be the unofficial spokespeople.”

During the debate, Mike Huckabee was asked how he might attract enough support from independents and Democrats to get elected, and Heimbach shouted at the TV, “You

don’t need to! All you need to do is get the Republican base to get out and vote.”

On a couch across from the television, Tony Hovater, who used to be a drummer in a band and now works as a welder, said that, from what he has heard from Trump, he suspects that Trump shares his fears about immigration but can’t say so openly. Hovater told me, “I think he’s, like, dog-whistling,” adding, “He’s saying we should probably favor more European immigration, or maybe more of just a meritocracy sort of system, but he’s not coming out and saying it, because people will literally stamp him: ‘Oh, you just hate Mexicans.’” Hovater hopes that Trump will find a way to be more forthright: “Why not just say it?”

For his part, Hovater hopes to get into politics. This fall, he’s running for City Council in New Carlisle, Ohio, representing what he and Heimbach have named the Traditional Workers Party. He is taking inspiration from Trump’s populist success. “Just like we’re seeing with Trump, if the people honestly feel like you’re fighting for them, they’ll rally behind you,” he said. He knows that his views are “extreme,” but Trump’s success tells him that people support tone over substance. “People will be, like, ‘Well, I’ll take the fighter, even though I might disagree with him on some things,’” he said.

As the debate wound down, Trump, in his final statement, recited his mantra of despair. “Our country is in serious trouble. We don’t win anymore,” he said. “We can’t do anything right.” Matthew Parrott, a Web developer who was sipping coffee from a cup adorned with a swastika, said, “He was sassy without being comical. He struck exactly the tone he needed to give the people supporting him exactly what they want more of.” He went on, “The political system hasn’t been providing an outlet for social-conservative populism. You had this Ron Paul revolution, and all the stuff about cutting taxes, small government, and that’s just not the electrifying issue that they were expecting it to be. Simple folks, they want the border secure. They want what Donald Trump is mirroring at them. I think he’s an intelligent businessman who

identified what the people want to hear. He’s made a living finding these sorts of opportunities.”

Trump emerged from the debate on a wrathful tear. When Megyn Kelly, the Fox News host, asked him to explain why he called some women “fat pigs, dogs, slobs, and disgusting animals,” Trump replied, “What I say is what I say.” In an interview the next day, he said that Kelly had “blood coming out of her eyes, blood coming out of her wherever.” In the attendant uproar, Trump played dumb, declaring that only a “deviant” would think he was referring to menstruation, when he was thinking only of her nose.

The Republican commentariat celebrated what finally seemed to be Trump’s immolation. A couple of days after the debate, Stephanie DeVolder, in Iowa, e-mailed me to say that Trump had lost her. “I am not offended by his comments (as much as I am embarrassed for him and his family).” She had soured on his “bullying,” and his “total disregard for manners.”

The polls did not follow suit, though. Trump not only remained the frontrunner—ahead of Bush and Cruz and the neurosurgeon Ben Carson, depending on the poll—but broadened his lead. (Two weeks after the debate, DeVolder changed her mind on Trump again. “I forgave him, as his message/platform continues to resonate above all else,” she wrote to me.)

On August 16th, with the media in full summer frenzy, Trump made his first detailed proposal, a six-page immigration plan that outlined an unprecedented crackdown. Presented as the remedy for a victimized nation—“We will not be taken advantage of anymore”—Trump’s plan called for the government to deport large segments of the undocumented population, seize money that these immigrants attempt to send home, and, contravening the Fourteenth Amendment to the Constitution, deny citizenship to their U.S.-born children.

The Federation for American Immigration Reform, a Washington-based organization that seeks to reduce immigration (it is classified as a hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center), hailed Trump’s plan as the “American Workers’ Bill of Rights.” Mark Meckler, the co-founder of the Tea Party

Patriots, described it as a new standard “that all the other candidates will now have to meet,” and Scott Walker immediately echoed Trump’s call for building a wall and ending birthright citizenship. Other Republicans recoiled, convinced that Trump’s nativist turn would taint the Party’s image as ruinously as Mitt Romney’s “self-deportation” comments in his race against Barack Obama. At the time, Trump himself disapproved of Romney’s approach, saying, in November, 2012, “He had a crazy policy of ‘self-deportation,’ which was maniacal. It sounded as bad as it was, and he lost all of the Latino vote. He lost the Asian vote. He lost everybody who is inspired to come into this country.” Trump now faced the risk that his new stance could eventually undo him.

On Tuesday of last week, Jorge Ramos, the most influential Latino news anchor, told his audience on the Fusion network, “Right now Donald Trump is, no question, the loudest voice of intolerance, hatred, and division in the United States.”

Before dawn on Wednesday, two brothers from South Boston allegedly attacked a homeless Hispanic man, breaking his nose and urinating on his face. The police said that, after the men were arrested, one of them, Scott Leader, justified the assault by saying, “Donald Trump was right—all these illegals need to be deported.” (Both men pleaded not guilty.) When Trump was asked at a press conference about the case, and about threats of other violence, he replied, “I think that would be a shame, but I haven’t heard about that. I will say that people that are following me are very passionate. They love this country, and they want this country to be great again, and they are very passionate, I will say that.” (Two days later, Trump, under fire, tweeted, “Boston incident is terrible.... I would never condone violence.”)

When Trump leaped to the head of the Republican field, he delivered the appearance of legitimacy to a moral vision once confined to the fevered fringe, elevating fantasies from the message boards and campgrounds to the center stage of American life. In doing so, he pulled America into a current that is coursing through other Western democracies—Britain, France, Spain, Greece,



You'll come here, but you won't go to Brooklyn?"

Scandinavia—where xenophobic, nationalist parties have emerged since the 2008 economic crisis to besiege middle-ground politicians. In country after country, voters beset by inequality and scarcity have reached past the sober promises of the center-left and the center-right to the spectre of a transcendent solution, no matter how cruel. “The more complicated the problem, the simpler the demands become,” Samuel Popkin, a political scientist at the University of California in San Diego, told me. “When people get frustrated and irritated, they want to cut the Gordian knot.”

Trump has succeeded in unleashing an old gene in American politics—the crude tribalism that Richard Hofstader named “the paranoid style”—and, over the summer, it replicated like a runaway mutation. Whenever Americans have confronted the reshuffling of status and influence—the Great Migration, the end of Jim Crow, the end of a white majority—we succumb to the anti-democratic politics of absolutism, of a “conflict between absolute good and absolute evil,” in which, Hofstader wrote, “the quality needed is not a willingness to compromise but the will to fight things out to a finish. Nothing but complete victory will do.” Trump was born to the part. “I’ll do nearly anything within legal

bounds to win,” he wrote, in “The Art of the Deal.” “Sometimes, part of making a deal is denigrating your competition.” Trump, who long ago mastered the behavioral nudges that could herd the public into his casinos and onto his golf courses, looked so playful when he gave out Lindsey Graham’s cell-phone number that it was easy to miss just how malicious a gesture it truly was. It expressed the knowledge that, with a single utterance, he could subject an enemy to that most savage weapon of all: us.

Trump’s candidacy has already left a durable mark, expanding the discourse of hate such that, in the midst of his feuds and provocations, we barely even registered that Senator Ted Cruz had called the sitting President “the world’s leading financier of radical Islamic terrorism,” or that Senator Marco Rubio had redoubled his opposition to abortion in cases of rape, incest, or a mortal threat to the mother. Trump has bequeathed a concoction of celebrity, wealth, and alienation that is more potent than any we’ve seen before. If, as the Republican establishment hopes, the stargazers eventually defect, Trump will be left with the hardest core—the portion of the electorate that is drifting deeper into unreality, with no reconciliation in sight. ♦

Fouad Ben Ahmed never paid much attention to *Charlie Hebdo*. He found the satirical magazine to be vulgar and not funny, and to him it seemed fixated on Islam, but he didn't think that its contributors did real harm. One of its cartoonists, Stéphane Charbonnier, also drew for *Le Petit Quotidien*, a children's paper to which Ben Ahmed subscribed for his two kids. On January 7th, upon hearing that two French brothers with Algerian names, Saïd and Chérif Kouachi, had executed twelve people at the *Charlie Hebdo* offices—including Charbonnier—in revenge for covers caricaturing Muhammad, Ben Ahmed wrote on Facebook, "My French heart bleeds, my Muslim soul weeps. Nothing, ABSOLUTELY NOTHING, can justify these barbaric acts. Don't talk to me about media or politicians who would play such-and-such a game, because there's no excuse for barbarism. #JeSuisCharlie."

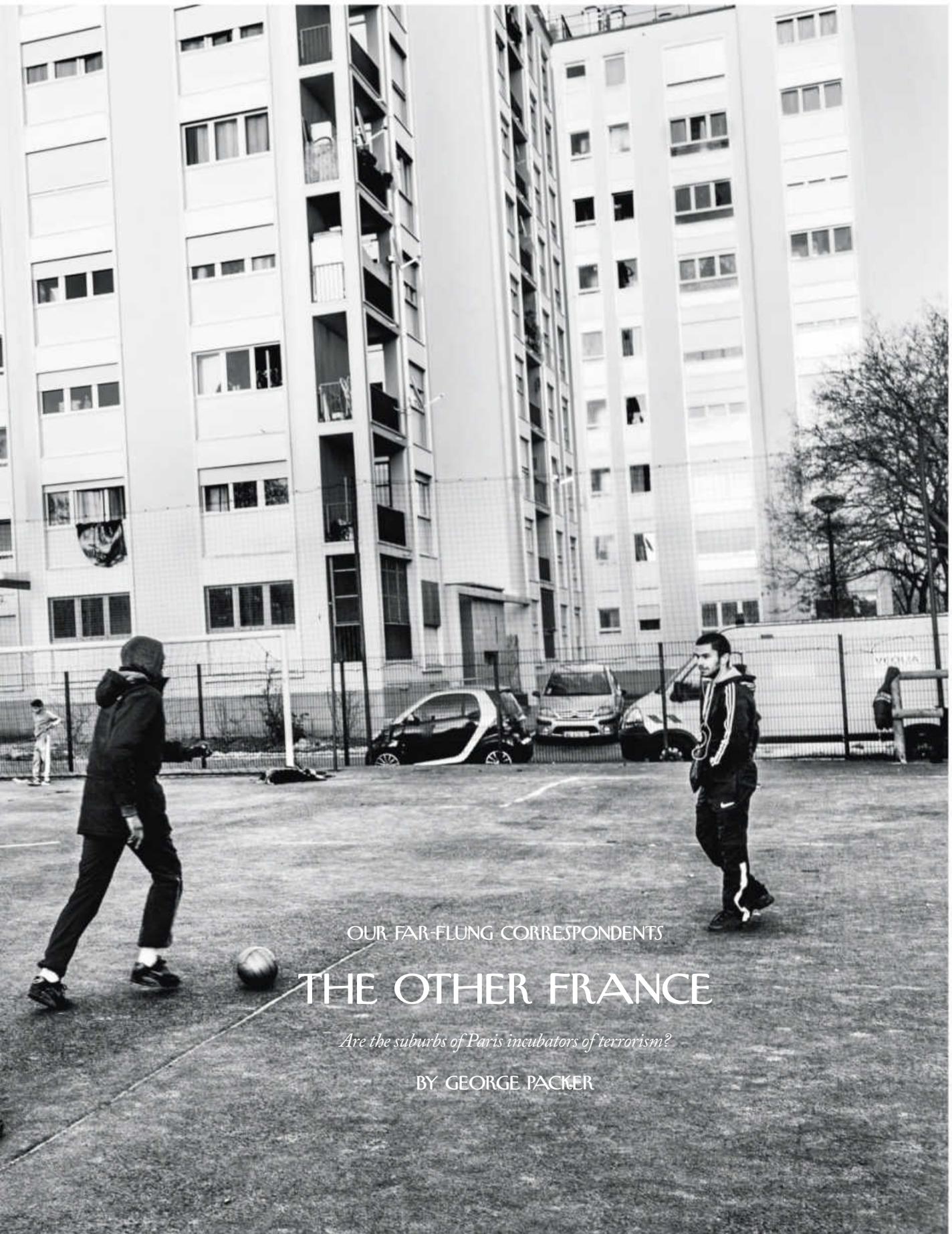
That night, Ben Ahmed left his house, in the suburbs outside Paris, and went into the city to join tens of thousands of people at a vigil. He is of Algerian and Tunisian descent, with dark skin, and a few white extremists spat threats at him, but Ben Ahmed ignored them—France was his country, too. On January 11th, he joined the one and a half million citizens who marched in unity from the Place de la République.

Ben Ahmed's Facebook page became a forum for others, mostly French Muslims, to discuss the attacks. Many expressed simple grief and outrage; a few aired conspiracy theories, suggesting a plot to stigmatize Muslims. "Let the investigators shed light on this massacre," Ben Ahmed advised. One woman wrote, "I fear for the Muslims of France. The narrow-minded or frightened are going to dig in their heels and make an *amalgame*"—conflate terrorists with all Muslims. Ben Ahmed agreed: "Our country is going to be more divided." He defended his use of #JeSuisCharlie, arguing that critiques of *Charlie*'s content, however legitimate before the attack, had no place afterward. "If we have a debate on the editorial line, it's like saying, 'Yes—but,'" he later told me. "In these conditions, that is unthinkable."

Ben Ahmed, who is thirty-nine, works as a liaison between residents and the local government in Bondy—a suburb, northeast of Paris, in an area called



Although the alienated, impoverished immigrant communities outside Paris are increasingly



OUR FAR-FLUNG CORRESPONDENTS

THE OTHER FRANCE

Are the suburbs of Paris incubators of terrorism?

BY GEORGE PACKER

prone to anti-Semitism, the profiles of French jihadists don't track closely with class. Many of them have come from bourgeois families.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNAU BACH

Department 93. For decades a bastion of the old working class and the Communist Party, the 93 is now known for its residents of Arab and African origin. To many Parisians, the 93 signifies decayed housing projects, crime, unemployment, and Muslims. France has all kinds of suburbs, but the word for them, *banlieues*, has become pejorative, meaning slums dominated by immigrants. Inside the *banlieues* are the *cités*: colossal concrete housing projects built during the postwar decades, in the Brutalist style of Le Corbusier. Conceived as utopias for workers, they have become concentrations of poverty and social isolation. The *cités* and their occupants are the subject of anxious and angry discussion in France. Two recent books by the eminent political scientist Gilles Kepel, “Banlieue de la République” and “Quatre-vingt-treize” (“Ninety-three”), are studies in industrial decline and growing segregation by group identity. There’s a French pejorative for that, too: *communautarisme*.

After the *Charlie* massacre—and after a third terrorist, Amedy Coulibaly, gunned down a black policewoman outside a Jewish school and four Jews at a kosher supermarket—there was a widespread feeling, in France and elsewhere, that the killings were somehow related to the *banlieues*. But an exact connection is not easy to establish. Although these

alienated communities are increasingly prone to anti-Semitism, the profiles of French jihadists don’t track closely with class; many have come from bourgeois families. The sense of exclusion in the *banlieues* is an acute problem that the republic has neglected for decades, but more jobs and better housing won’t put an end to French jihadism.

Ben Ahmed has lived in the 93 his entire life. A few years ago, he and his wife, Carolina, and their two children moved into a small house near Charles de Gaulle Airport. They wanted to be near a private school that the children attend, because most public schools in the 93 are overcrowded and chaotic, and staffed by younger, less qualified teachers. Ben Ahmed spent his teens in one of the toughest suburbs, Bobigny, in a notorious *cité* called l’Abreuvoir. During his twenties and early thirties, Ben Ahmed was employed by the Bobigny government as a community organizer, working with troubled youth—some of them his friends and neighbors, many just out of prison or headed there. His authority on life in the *cités* exceeds that of any scholar.

After the attacks, Ben Ahmed wrote an open letter to President François Hollande titled “All Partly Responsible, but Not Guilty.” He identified himself as a *banlieue* resident who had often “seen death a few metres from me.” He wrote

about the problems of joblessness, discrimination, and collective withdrawal from society. He recalled that, in October, 2001, a soccer game in Paris between France and Algeria—the first such match since Algerian independence, in 1962—had to be called off when thousands of French youths of North African origin booed the “Marseillaise” and invaded the field, some chanting, “Bin Laden, bin Laden!” The French public responded with righteous revulsion. “The problem was before our eyes,” Ben Ahmed wrote. “But instead of asking good questions, we chose stigmatization, refusal of the other.” He went on, “The split was born on that day, the feeling of rejection expressed by the political class, when we could have asked other questions: What’s wrong? What’s the problem?”

Ben Ahmed wears sharp dark suits, even on weekends, as if such formality were the only way for an Arab from the 93 to be taken seriously. When I met him, soon after the attacks, he told me, “In French, we say, ‘Clothes don’t make the monk’—but they do, unfortunately.” For the same reason, he always speaks proper French, not the accented slang of the *banlieues*. He shaves his head close, the black stubble of his hairline descending to a widow’s peak. He has a broad, boyish face and a disarming smile; as he shuttles around the 93, with quick, lock-kneed strides, he seems to know everyone by name. But as a youth in l’Abreuvoir he had to learn to fight—he trained at *boxe française*, a form of kickboxing—and his eyes can turn hooded and flat under stress. Two years ago, upon entering a cinema with his children, Ben Ahmed noticed that a patron was carrying a shotgun. (The man was out to settle scores with his wife and her lover.) Ben Ahmed told his children to lie down, stalked the gunman for thirty feet, then grabbed him from behind and took him to the floor in a Brazilian-jujitsu chokehold. After security guards arrived, Ben Ahmed escorted his children into a screening of “Man of Steel.”

Ben Ahmed had been nurturing political ambitions, and the incident made him a neighborhood hero. He decided to run for local office. “I have an ability to talk with everyone, because I respect the other,” he told me. “I think there’s always some good at the bottom of everyone.” Ben Ahmed’s wife and friends consider him a little naïve, but naïveté is



“First, I’ll read the minutes from your last weddings.”

almost a requirement for a *banlieue* Muslim entering French politics during a national-identity crisis.

The highway that encircles Paris is known as the Périphérique. Entering or leaving the suburbs is often called “crossing the Périphérique,” as if it were a frontier. *Banlieue* residents joke that going into Paris requires a visa and a vaccination card. Mehdi Meklat, a young writer at Bondy Blog, which reports on the *banlieues*, told me, “There are two parallel worlds.” He called the dynamic between Paris and the suburbs “schizophrenic.”

The R.E.R., the rail network linking Paris to its suburbs, takes you from the Gare du Nord to Ben Ahmed’s station in just nineteen minutes. The trip begins in a tunnel, and when the train emerges the boulevards lined with bistro awnings are gone. Even the weather seems different—damp and murky, with a wind blowing from the southwest. (The suburbs of the 93 grew around factories that had been situated northeast of Paris in order to allow industrial smells to drift away from the City of Light.) The rail tracks cut through a disordered landscape of graffiti-covered walls, glass office buildings, soccer fields, trash fires, abandoned industrial lots, modest houses with red tile roofs, and clusters of twenty-story monoliths—the *cités*.

The *banlieues* are far more diverse than the ghettos of American cities. On the R.E.R., I saw a man speaking Tamil on his cell phone; an Asian woman watching her two boys; North African women in every variety of hijab, or in none; an elderly white man; a black man in a blazer reading the sports section; an Arab begging in the aisle with a child in his arms. Wealthy neighborhoods stand next door to poor ones, privately owned houses are interspersed with housing projects, and people of every color and religion shop in the commercial centers. In a dingy little restaurant in Montreuil, on an empty street near a *cité*, Arab men were served by a white waitress. The *banlieues* have housed generations of immigrants, and the older tide of Portuguese, Italians, and Poles hasn’t completely gone out with the more recent waves of Arabs, Africans, and Chinese. The suburbs are thought to remain majority white, though no one knows for sure because, in France, collecting statistics by ethnicity or reli-

gion is illegal. (A precise count isn’t necessary for the *cités*: they are overwhelmingly Arab and black.)

For all their vitality, the *banlieues* feel isolated from the city, and from France itself. Parisians and tourists rarely visit them, and residents complain that journalists drop in only to report on car burnings and drug shootings. The suburb Clichy-sous-Bois—the scene, in 2005, of youth riots that spread across the country—has tried to raise revenue by offer-



ing a *tour de banlieue* for curious outsiders. Many suburban residents, meanwhile, never even think of going to Paris. Compared with American slums, the *banlieues* have relatively decent standards of housing and safety, but the psychological distance between the 93 and the Champs-Elysées can feel insuperable—much greater than that between the Bronx and Times Square. The apartment blocks in the *cités*, often arranged around a pharmacy, a convenience store, and a fast-food joint, look inward. Many have no street addresses, obvious points of entry, or places to park. The sense of separation is heightened by the names of the surrounding streets and schools, preserved from a historical France that has little connection to residents’lives. The roads around Gros Saule—a drug-ridden *cité* where the police dare not enter—include Rue Henri Matisse and Rue Claude Debussy.

“It’s a social frontier,” Badroudine Abdallah, Mehdi Meklat’s colleague at Bondy Blog, said. “It’s not just about being black or Arab. It’s also about having relationships at your disposal, a network.” Meklat and Abdallah, who are in their twenties, told me about weeklong internships required of French ninth graders. Most of their classmates ended up in lousy little bakeries or pharmacies, or with nothing, because corporations wouldn’t answer queries from the children of immigrants in the 93.

Being from the *banlieues* is a serious impediment to employability, and nearly every resident I met had a story about

discrimination. Fanta Ba, the daughter of Senegalese immigrants, has taken to sending out job applications using her middle name, France, and Frenchifying her last name to Bas, but she remains out of work. Whenever she hears of a terrorist attack in France, she prays, “Don’t let it be an Arab, a black, a Muslim.” On January 7th, she turned off the TV and avoided Facebook for two days. She couldn’t bear to rewatch the violent images or hear that all Muslims bore some responsibility. “To have to say, ‘I am Charlie’ or ‘I am a Muslim and I condemn this—it’s too much,’ she said. “It wasn’t me. I asked myself, ‘How will this end? Are they going to put crosses on the apartment doors of Muslims or Arabs?’”

Ben Ahmed has a friend from Bobigny named Brahim Aniba, an accountant who, like many *banlieue* residents, once endured a period of unemployment. To receive state benefits, he had to meet with a job counsellor. Aniba told me that the counsellor, wanting to help, said, “You don’t have an aunt who lives in Paris or somewhere else? Because Bobigny—really? Cité Grémillon?” This was the French equivalent of Shitsville. The counsellor advised, “If you have an address in Paris, a post-office box, just to receive mail, it’s better. And then the family name, Aniba—it’s O.K., but the first name, Brahim, use ‘B.’”

“Madame, why don’t I just drop my pants instead?” Aniba said.

Simply defining who is French can make small talk tricky. When people ask Widad Ketfi, a thirty-year-old journalist, where she’s from, she replies, “Bondy,” but that never ends the conversation. “Of what origin?” “French.” “Where are your parents from?” “France!” Even citizens of immigrant descent often identify whites with the term *Français de souche*—“French from the roots.” The implication is that people with darker skin are not fully French.

Fanta Ba said, “You do everything for France, to be accepted, but you feel you’re not welcome.” This is especially true for Muslims. In a poll taken by *Le Monde* after the attacks, a majority of respondents agreed that Islam is incompatible with French values. In a *cité* like Trappes, where Ba grew up, some Muslims have separated from French society: women are disappearing under the black abaya; men are dropping out of school to sell Islamic clothing online. Ba doesn’t cover

her hair, but she has become more observant as she struggles with being jobless and alone. Withdrawal, she said, was often a reaction to exclusion.

In the 2012 elections, nine of the five hundred and seventy-seven seats in France's National Assembly were won by nonwhite candidates—an increase of eight seats. France remains a caste society where social capital is king. It's ruled by *les énarques*—graduates of the prestigious École Nationale d'Administration, in Strasbourg. According to Laurent Bouvet, a political scientist, an élite degree is the only guarantee of finding a good job in a country that's mired in economic torpor. This is increasingly true in America, too, but the U.S. absorbs immigrants far more easily than France. What the two countries have in common—and what makes them unique—is a national identity based not just on history, blood, soil, and culture but on the idea of popular sovereignty. In France, this is called republicanism, and in theory the idea is universal. In practice, being part of the French republic has to do not just with democracy and secularism but also with what you wear, what you eat, and what you name your children.

In 2007, a national immigration museum opened in the Porte Dorée, an Art Deco palace in eastern Paris which was built for a colonial exposition in 1931. Tradition requires French Presidents to inaugurate national museums, but Nicolas Sarkozy, who had used immigration as a wedge issue in his election campaign, refused to attend. The Musée de l'Histoire de l'Immigration opened without official ceremony. (Last December, after seven years, Hollande, a Socialist, finally inaugurated it.) When I went to the museum, in February, there were few visitors, and many Parisians remain unaware of its existence.

That struck me as a missed opportunity, for the exhibitions tell a rich story, going back to the mid-nineteenth century, when France was receiving new immigrants while the rest of Europe was creating them. As recently as the nineteen-thirties, France had the world's highest number of immigrants per capita. The museum's placards offer historical reassurance: "The figure of the unassimilable foreigner accompanies every wave of immigrants. From the Italians at the end of the nineteenth century to the Africans

of today, the stereotypes hardly change: immigrants are too numerous, carriers of disease, potential criminals, aliens in the body of the nation. This xenophobia, recurring in times of crisis, is often paired with anti-Semitism and fed by racism."

The least digestible aspect of France's colonial past is Algeria. When Algeria was settled by Europeans, in the early nineteenth century, it became part of greater France, and remained so until 1962, when independence was achieved, after an eight-year war in which seven hundred thousand people died. It's hard to overstate how heavily this intimate, sad history has been repressed. "The Battle of Algiers," the filmmaker Gillo Pontecorvo's neo-realist masterpiece about insurgency, counterinsurgency, terrorism, and torture in Algiers, was banned in France for five years after its release, in 1966, and it remains taboo there. On October 17, 1961, during demonstrations by pro-independence Algerians in Paris and its suburbs, the French police killed some two hundred people, throwing many bodies off bridges into the Seine. It took forty years for France to acknowledge that this massacre had occurred, and the incident remains barely mentioned in schools. Young people in the *banlieues* told me that colonial history is cursorily taught, and literature from former colonies hardly read.

Andrew Hussey, a British scholar at the University of London School of Advanced Study in Paris, believes that the turmoil in the *banlieues*—periodic riots, car burnings, brawls with cops—is one more front in the long war between France and its Arabs, especially Algerians. The aim of the violence isn't reform or revolution but revenge. "The kids in the *banlieues* live in this perpetual present of weed, girls, gangsters, Islam," he said. "They have no sense of history, no sense of where they come from in North Africa, other than localized bits of Arabic that they don't understand, bits of Islam that don't really make sense."

Hussey's recent book, "The French Intifada," describes the conflict in such dire terms that his French publisher refused to release a translation. His *banlieue* research is less nuanced than that of Kepel (the phrase "French intifada" drew laughs of disbelief when I mentioned it to some *banlieue* residents), but it's vivid and firsthand. The book opens

with an eyewitness account of an eight-hour battle, in the Gare du Nord in 2007, between cops and *banlieue* kids who shout, in Arabic, "Fuck France!" Hussey writes, "This slogan—it is in fact more of a curse—has nothing to do with any French tradition of revolt." But his portrait leaves out all the *banlieue* residents who are trying to be both Muslim and French—people like Fouad Ben Ahmed.

One night, at a Thai restaurant in the suburb of Aulnay-sous-Bois, Ben Ahmed said, "I barely know my history. It's not taught, and because it's painful my mother and my grandfather never told me." Still, he knew the basics of the French-Algerian War, and he spoke about the *pieds-noirs*—French settlers in Algeria who, after independence, fled what they considered their homeland—and the Harkis, Algerian Muslims who supported French rule and were demonized by other Algerians. At the end of the war, neither country made a place for citizens with conflicting allegiances and identities: Algeria became an Arab state, and France cauterized its wounds by pretending that the conflict hadn't happened. Among the *pieds-noirs*, Harkis, and Algerians who immigrated to France for economic reasons, guilt and recrimination have impeded a candid reckoning with their shared pasts. Ben Ahmed said, "And since neither our parents nor the state tells us this history, other people come along to tell us lies in order to justify things that are unjustifiable." He meant jihadists.

Ben Ahmed's grandfather was an Algerian who enlisted in the French Army and immigrated to the Paris *banlieues* in 1958. Most immigrants of that period entered France as laborers—factory hands, street-cleaners—and lived in shantytowns. Their presence was expected to be temporary. When it became clear that most of the immigrants weren't returning home, the shantytowns were cleared and the workers were moved into the *cités*. Ben Ahmed's grandfather, with his military pay, was able to afford a small house in the 93. Ben Ahmed's mother was a secretary in a metallurgical factory; his father disappeared when Fouad was two. He grew up in relative ease in his grandparents' house until 1989, when they sold it. Ben Ahmed was thirteen.

At the time, his mother was unemployed, and she and Fouad had to move

to l'Abreuvoir, the *cité* in Bobigny. L'Abreuvoir had been considered innovative when it was built, in the sixties, with undulating rows of four-story low-rises and green circular towers. But by the nineties it had become a center of heroin trafficking. Once, Ben Ahmed walked into the lobby of his building and saw a man holding a bag of drugs and a wad of cash. "Get out

was J.-P., a wild kid from Salvador Alende, another *cité* in Bobigny. Ben Ahmed, twelve years older, had known J.-P. almost since birth. ("Bobigny is like a village," J.-P. said.) J.-P. was a métis: Arab father, white mother. His grandfather had emigrated from Algeria in 1954, and became a street-cleaner. His father belonged to what J.-P. called "an up-

never took out his earphones, and he often withdrew into a haze, only to emerge with full powers of focus and articulation. He had been imprisoned three times since 2010. His first conviction, he said, had involved "a little of everything—weapons possession, violence, buying drugs."

Ben Ahmed recalled that he and J.-P. knew a teen-age girl whose boyfriend



Fouad Ben Ahmed, a lifelong banlieue resident, wrote of the Charlie Hebdo attacks, "My French heart bleeds, my Muslim soul weeps."

of here, or I'll take care of you," the man said. Ben Ahmed fled.

He was an indifferent student, forced to repeat several grades, but his mother made him stick with it, because her welfare benefits would drop if he quit school. He helped support her and his little brother by delivering washing machines to Paris apartments. Some of his friends were drug dealers, and Ben Ahmed might have become a criminal, too, had he not met Carolina, the daughter of political refugees from Chile. When they were eighteen, she told Ben Ahmed to choose between his crowd and her. With Carolina's help, he finished high school, got a college degree in social management, and became a youth organizer.

One youth Ben Ahmed tried to help

rooted generation, with their ass on two chairs"—unwanted by both the old country and the new. J.-P.'s father is still alive, but most of his father's friends died young, from violence, drugs, or AIDS. J.-P. grew up a tattooed devotee of "Scarface" and Tupac Shakur. At fourteen, he was expelled from school and began selling drugs and stealing. "When people lay down the law with violence, to get the last word you have to be the most violent," J.-P. said. He didn't see himself as a victim. "I was a little asshole. I chose to get into it. I should've tried not to go down that path. The problem is why the path's there at all."

We drove around the 93 in Ben Ahmed's Citroën. J.-P.—light-skinned, ripped jeans, bad teeth—sat in back. He

was a thug. Ben Ahmed advised the girl to be careful, and, when word got back to the boyfriend, he confronted Ben Ahmed: "What the fuck do you want?" The next night, Ben Ahmed asked a friend in the boyfriend's *cité* to go with a few others to calm the guy down. When the boyfriend saw the group approaching, he pulled out a pistol and fired warning shots.

"Sometimes it's hard—wanting to try to help certain people and finding yourself in a situation that's difficult," Ben Ahmed told me.

"Two years later, I slept with the girl," J.-P. said, laughing. "The same guy shot me in the leg."

"What's also hard is for someone like me who wants to help J.-P.," Ben Ahmed

said. "Sometimes you feel people aren't ready to be helped."

"Hey, you're starting to annoy me," J.-P. said. "Give me a hundred thousand euros. *That* would help!" He complained that his stomach was growling. We dropped him off at a Senegalese cafeteria.

"You're very intelligent but wrong in the head," Ben Ahmed said to him.

"I like my life," J.-P. said. "It's never too late to change." He walked away, with a slight limp.

"I'm afraid he'll end badly," Ben Ahmed said.

In 2004, the French parliament passed a law forbidding religious symbols in public schools. The law emerged in response to Muslim girls coming to class with their hair covered. The legislation affirmed the century-old French concept of *laïcité*, or secularism, which enshrines state neutrality toward religion and prevents religion from intruding into the civic space. (In America, the intent of secularism was nearly the reverse, prohibiting state interference in religion.) But many French Muslims interpreted the ban as an act of gratuitous hostility. Some of them told me, inaccurately, that the law had made an exception for the Jewish kippah.

"School is a sacred space in republican theory—it's the church of the republic," Vincent Martigny, a political scientist at the École Polytechnique, outside Paris, said. "School is the place where an individual, especially a child, becomes a citizen, which is a superior form of the individual." Martigny noted that rigid republicanism coexists in France with public support for cultural diversity—in cinema, in local festivals. But in an era of insecurity France is undergoing what he called "moral panic attacks." In a recent poll in *Le Monde*, forty-two per cent of respondents said that they no longer felt at home in France.

After the *Charlie* killings, dozens of mosques around France were defaced, and in a few cases fired upon. Veiled girls and women were harassed. Some French Muslims complained that, while the government sent armed soldiers to guard Jewish sites, Muslim sites were initially left unprotected. The complaint, though

accurate, obscured key differences of degree and kind: Jews, who represent less than one per cent of the French population, are the victims of half the country's hate crimes, and in recent years they've been the repeated targets of murderous violence.

On January 8th, there was a nationwide minute of silence for the *Charlie* victims. At least a hundred incidents

were reported of students in *banlieue* schools refusing to observe it. People in the 93 explained that some rebellious kids were just acting out. But the public was outraged. Sarkozy, eying another shot at the Presidency in 2017, demanded that schools stop serving halal food—if Muslim kids didn't

want to eat pork, they could forgo eating.

Hélène Kuhnmunch teaches history in a vocational high school in Colombes, a *banlieue* northwest of Paris. The vocational schools are despised, she said, as tools of "exclusion from the system," and they have few resources. Kuhnmunch is a fifteen-year veteran who teaches *banlieue* youths because she loves their humor and energy. In 2008, she and a group of immigrant kids made a documentary film about the Franco-Algerian history that lay buried in the children's families. One boy discovered that his father had been among the Algerians thrown by police into the Seine. (He survived.)

Kuhnmunch said that her students responded to the *Charlie* attacks with defensiveness, adding, "This wasn't new, this feeling of always being pushed back on their origins, their religion, of being insulted." Kuhnmunch, who lives in Paris, did not attend the unity march at the Place de la République, because she knew "that the *banlieues* would not be there." She spent that day gathering material for a class on the attacks.

In school on Monday, a Muslim student raised his hand. "Madame, the cartoons—I was against them," he said. "But you don't kill for that." It saddened Kuhnmunch that he felt compelled to reassure her. Others echoed the conspiracy theories on social media, including one dreamy, funny boy who was among her favorites, but who had closed up in anger. Kuhnmunch turned the discussion to the history of secularism. In the *banlieues*, *laïcité*

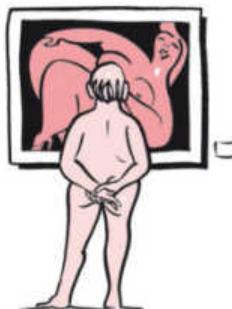
has become synonymous with atheism and Islamophobia. Kuhnmunch told her students about the Edict of Nantes, in 1598, when King Henry IV granted rights to French Protestants for the first time. The class discussed laws, passed in the eighteen-eighties, which eliminated religious education in public schools. She showed her students anti-clerical cartoons from that time, and they analyzed *Charlie's* drawings (though not ones of Muhammad) in their political context.

"They realized that the same arguments were made then on the subject of the Catholic religion and in 2004 on this story of the veil," she said. "And that moved them—that this wasn't just something against Islam, that it comes out of a tradition."

J.-P. offered to take me to a mosque in Bobigny. He rarely went there himself; his attachment to Islam had less to do with faith than with cultural identity. One Friday afternoon, he showed up at the concrete shopping mall in the town center wearing a glossy black hooded coat, a long black skirt over gray sweatpants, green-and-yellow sneakers, and earphones—religious gangster attire. We followed a footpath away from the projects, under railroad tracks, up to a scrubby clearing beside a junk yard of decaying freight containers. A double trailer stood next to a white tent. This was the central mosque of Bobigny, a town of fifty thousand people. (A new mosque, planned for years, remained unbuilt.) There was a bottleneck where men streamed through the door of one of the trailers. Women, out of view, were presumably in the other trailer. In the entryway, shoes were piled waist high. We squeezed inside the sanctuary, which had barely eight feet of headroom, and found places at the back.

At least two hundred men were kneeling, heads bowed to the carpet. On the coming Sunday, a few miles away, the magnificent, cavernous churches of Paris would be nearly empty. The imam, an elderly Tunisian who spoke little French, gave the closing prayer. J.-P. kept his earphones in.

Afterward, in the crush at the exit—old North African men, young blacks in street clothes, fundamentalists with long beards in ankle-length skirts—J.-P. introduced me to some of his friends.



"Allahu akbar!" they exclaimed in surprised welcome, but they seemed even more surprised to see J.-P. He said to me, "Not everyone has to be a Muslim in the same way. There are sixty-two approaches to Islam."

I mentioned a few I knew about, including Sufism and Salafism.

"We're all Salafists," J.-P. said. "We all want to live like the companions of the Prophet in the seventh century."

The Salafists I knew were extreme ascetics—they didn't drink, smoke, or sleep around. J.-P. enjoyed his "glass of wine," and had plans to get wasted that very night. His idea of Salafism seemed little more than an aspiration to be a more observant Muslim.

He had hesitated to take me inside a *cité*—he had too many enemies. Instead of showing me around his own housing project, he led me across the street to a larger block of towers called Chemin Vert. J.-P. knew everyone there, too. "This guy is a big rapper," he said of a loiterer, who nodded warily. Two young Arabs were hanging out in front of a tower, and J.-P. identified one as a dealer. The other, learning that I had come from America, cried, "Is it true that Tupac is dead?" A group of bearded men from the mosque greeted us. J.-P. introduced me to one of them, joking that the man might be heading off to Syria. The man smiled uneasily.

In the deserted center of Chemin Vert, on a plaza surrounded by eight twenty-story towers, J.-P. stopped walking. "See?" he said. "It closes you off." The *cité* felt like the perimeter walls of a prison. Even Brutalist Bobigny had disappeared. J.-P. was gazing at nothing I could discern. The air was dense with rain that wouldn't fall. "There's nothing at all for kids," he said. "I've never seen the 'Mona Lisa.' I want to see it before I die."

In the middle of the *cité*, at a fast-food counter, we ordered lunch: a pile of fried meat covered in processed cheese. J.-P., still wearing earphones, asked the cook what he thought of the Islamic State. The cook said that it was bad. J.-P. agreed, but his politics were heavily inflected with a sense of Muslim oppression. If Muslims wanted to go fight in Syria or Iraq, that was their business. France was different. If someone hurt France, he hurt J.-P., too.

"France is our mother," J.-P. said as he ate. His own mother was a white Frenchwoman. "Your father, he gives you more—Islam. But your mother is still your mother. And, whatever happens, you'll love her your whole life. Even if she didn't cherish you."

Other Muslims had described themselves as unloved children of the republic. Widad Ketfi, the journalist, said, "If you have children you don't take care of, a day will come when you tell them, 'Do this,' and they'll say, 'I don't give a damn. You're not my father.'" Sometimes French Muslims compete for their father's love with his other, more favored children—the Jews. Or else they search for another father.

"Islam sometimes brings the radiance and love and affection that the republic doesn't give," J.-P. said. He laughed at his own words. "Because me—I'm rotten."

When I met J.-P., he was looking for work. Eventually, Ben Ahmed helped him find a job as a housepainter, with the city of Bondy. But J.-P.'s life was hardly stable. He had a court date pending—he had been charged with armed assault. He told me that he wasn't too worried about returning to jail, because he was "four hundred per cent innocent." The first of his prison terms, he

told me, had been in Villepinte, near the airport. Among the inmates was Amedy Coulibaly.

Coulibaly, the French son of Malian parents, grew up in a *cité* south of Paris. At fifteen, he began a career in armed robbery, and during one of his imprisonments, in 2006, he met a newly converted Islamist named Chérif Kouachi. Both twenty-three, they found a mentor in a veteran jihadist named Djamel Beghal, who had been born in Algeria and had brought radical Islamist views with him when he moved to France, in 1987. Beghal visited Afghanistan and became an Al Qaeda operative in 2000; the following year, he was charged in France with plotting to bomb the U.S. Embassy in Paris. From an isolation cell in prison, he managed to communicate with Coulibaly and Kouachi. At one point, Coulibaly used a smuggled camera to shoot video of the prison's dismal conditions. The footage aired on French TV.

The leading authority on jihadism in French prisons is an Iranian sociologist in Paris named Farhad Khosrokhavar. For his book "Radicalisation," published just before the January attacks, he spent three days a week in French prisons for three years, developing a theory of inmate conversion. It happens in



"Sorry! Traffic was awful and also I left really late."



"I design retinal-controlled destination-mapping interfaces for self-driving transportation, but not in the traditional sense."

• •

stages. Most of the recruits grow up without fathers and without any religious knowledge—only anger and alienation in the *banlieues*. They fall into crime and end up in prison. J.-P. described the mind-set of some of his fellow-inmates: “I’m in prison, the state is to blame—it pushed me to live this life.” Prisoners watch a lot of TV news, and see war and death in Muslim countries. Someone like Coulibaly, J.-P. said, starts to “mix all this together” and create his own ideology, then “runs across a bad person who influences him.” One former prisoner I met in the 93 explained that Islamists target the *fragiles*, psychologically weak inmates who never receive visits. They are offered solace, a new identity, and a political vision inverting the social order that places them at the bottom.

As Khosrokhavar analyzes it, prisoners are “born again”: “Through jihadism, they transform the contempt of the others.... Once they become jihadists, peo-

ple fear them. One of them told me, ‘Once they fear you, they cannot be contemptuous toward you anymore.’” After converts are released, they go on an “initiation journey” to the Middle East or North Africa, where they become capable of extreme violence. They come to think “that they belong elsewhere, to the Islamic community, and not to the French society.”

Khosrokhavar estimates that, of France’s sixty-four thousand prisoners, up to sixty per cent are Muslim. (Muslims are thought to compose only eight per cent of the population.) These inmates are served by fewer than two hundred prison imams, many of whom are older immigrants and unable to understand life in the *banlieues*. France once had many Islamist mosques, but its internal intelligence service rooted out radical imams, and the country’s mosques are now pointedly apolitical. Recruitment, therefore, happens outside the mosque, in prisons or on the Internet.

The conversion process rarely involves more than three people, to thwart infiltration. French intelligence estimates the number of suspected jihadists to be three thousand, in a country of sixty-five million people.

Radicalization, then, is not a mass phenomenon in the *banlieues*. “There are no jihadi pools,” Jean-Pierre Filiu, an Arabist at the élite Paris Institute of Political Studies, said. Becoming a jihadist is a quantum leap requiring self-isolation, a break with one’s upbringing, and dehumanization of non-Muslims.

In 2007, after Coulibaly was released, he appeared to go straight. He got a short-term job at a Coca-Cola bottling plant, married his girlfriend, Hayat Boumediene, in an Islamic ceremony, and met President Sarkozy, at a 2009 event promoting youth employment. But Coulibaly led a double life. He cut himself off from his parents, whom he considered infidels. He stayed in touch with Beghal and Kouachi after their release, meeting in the South of France and supplying them with weapons and money. “When jihadis go on the run, they don’t go to the *banlieues*,” Filiu said. “They go to the countryside, to a place where you don’t have a Muslim for ten kilometres.”

In 2010, French police arrested Coulibaly again, finding a stash of ammunition in his apartment. He was convicted of plotting to spring from prison an Islamist who had organized bombings around France in 1995, killing eight people. Coulibaly was sent to Villepinte prison, where J.-P. was serving time. They watched TV and competed on a PlayStation. “He was nice, smiling, pleasant,” J.-P. recalled. “I never saw him bother anyone. He never preached. If someone told me this person was capable of doing what happened, I wouldn’t have bet on that horse.” Coulibaly was released early, in March, 2014. He slipped off the police radar, before surfacing just after the *Charlie* massacre as the Kouachis’ accomplice and a self-proclaimed soldier of the Islamic State.

More than the Kouachi brothers, Coulibaly, who was killed by French police during the standoff at the kosher market, became a subject of fascination in the *banlieues*. The Kouachis were raised as orphans in a provincial institution, and were radicalized in their early twenties, after the invasion of Iraq, by recruiters in

the northeast corner of Paris. For the Kouachis, a jihadist destiny seemed over-determined. Coulibaly was the son of a factory worker, and was raised by both parents in a *cité* south of Paris. And he was black. France's high-profile jihadists had been Arabs, from Zacarias Moussaoui, the thwarted "twentieth hijacker" of September 11th, to Mohammed Merah, who murdered three Jewish schoolchildren, a rabbi, and three paratroopers in the Toulouse area, in 2012. A young man of Malian origin told me that, when Coulibaly's face appeared on French TV, in front of a homemade Islamic State banner, a friend of his mother's cried out, "Oh, no—now they'll accuse us. That's why I tell you not to hang out with Arabs!"

Mehdi Meklat and Badroudine Abdallah, of Bondy Blog, found Coulibaly such an enigma that they considered writing a novel about him. "He could be someone we know," Meklat said. And yet Coulibaly had cast himself in the role of a great man. At the kosher supermarket, after killing three customers and an employee, he calmly introduced himself to his fifteen hostages, saying, "Je suis Amedy Coulibaly. I am Malian and Muslim. I belong to the Islamic State." (Abdallah noted the eerie echo of "Je suis Charlie.")

In videos made just before the attack and posted after his death, Coulibaly keeps changing costume, as if to emphasize his transformation. He wears a gang-banger's leather jacket in one, a military flak vest in another, a turban and the white robe of a martyr in a third. Always, an automatic is at his side. "It was as if, for him, he didn't exist enough," Abdallah said. "It wasn't enough to be a normal guy."

From the supermarket, Coulibaly contacted the media, asking to speak with the police and pledging allegiance to the Islamic State. During the siege, he angrily justified his actions to his hostages, citing the incarceration of Muslims, hostility toward women wearing the hijab, Israel's treatment of Palestinians, and French military action in Mali and Syria. He demanded to know why, if French citizens could rally together after the *Charlie* massacre, they had never demonstrated on behalf of persecuted Muslims. "I was born in France," he declared.

Abdallah and Meklat noted that, in 2000, during an armed robbery, the po-

lice had shot and killed a close friend of Coulibaly's right in front of him. Coulibaly, in other words, was a *fragile*. It wasn't hard to get him to "go against French society," Abdallah said, because France had already rejected him. In this explanation, a fairly direct line could be drawn between Coulibaly's life in the Paris suburbs and terrorism. But this didn't account for why almost no other *banlieusards*—including criminals who had been subject to worse indignities—had committed mass murder against schoolchildren, Jews, and cartoonists. The social explanation, used commonly on the left in France and the U.S., oddly mirrors the right's tendency to make an *amalgame*—to mix up terrorists with all Muslims. Both views suggest that an evil deed can be attributed largely to a perpetrator's social or religious identity. In addition to insulting the vast majority of French Muslims, this analysis fails to treat Coulibaly as an individual. And it ignores the fact that he had adopted a set of beliefs. In one of Coulibaly's videos, he describes his motives in the stark terms of ideology: "What we're doing is totally legitimate given what you're doing. It's vengeance. You attack the caliphate, you attack the Islamic State? We attack you. You're the ones killing. Why—because we uphold Sharia? Even in our own land we can't uphold Sharia. You get to decide what happens on earth?"

Another youth whom Ben Ahmed tried to help was named Stéphane. He came from a Catholic Haitian family and grew up near his friend J.-P., in a *cité* in Bobigny. When Stéphane was thirteen, his father died and he became so disruptive at school that he was expelled. He turned to petty crime, and he and his friends regularly drank themselves into a stupor.

At sixteen, Stéphane heard someone reciting a verse of the Koran and felt tears come to his eyes. He didn't understand the words, but the sounds moved him. Most of his friends were Muslims, and he decided to convert. He stopped drinking, and quit a restaurant training program that required him to prepare pork. But he wasn't ready to go completely straight, and at nineteen he was arrested and sentenced to eighteen months in prison. Inside, he began praying five times a day, and when he got out

he vowed to reform his life. He started a business that rented inflatable castles and other equipment for children's parties, and made a point of hiring unemployed locals. He formed a group that organized excursions for youths in the *cités*. He married J.-P.'s cousin, and with his earnings he moved to a small house not far from Ben Ahmed's.

I met Stéphane there one day in February. We sat at the kitchen table while his wife, who was pregnant, watched TV. Stéphane was lightly bearded and wore pajama bottoms and a T-shirt that clung to his muscular torso. His answers were terse until I asked him what role life in the *banlieues* had played in the January attacks.

"The neighborhoods and the environment don't create it—it's the people themselves," he said. Men like Coulibaly "think everything here in this lower world is useless, it's just a passage. And this ideology that they have—it's not the fact that you live in a *banlieue* that gives it to you. It's your faith." Stéphane could see that Coulibaly was "fed up" with "the injustice we have here in France." But even if Coulibaly's milieu was the context for his actions, it wasn't the cause. "He reacted—and a lot of people react, you know. But most don't have such a strong faith to do those acts that he did."

What stops them? I asked.

"Fear."

Stéphane leaned forward, his eyes fixed on mine. He hadn't said that he admired Coulibaly's actions, but he hadn't issued the immediate condemnation made by nearly everyone else I'd met in the 93. Stéphane seemed to be saying that what separated Coulibaly from all the other pissed-off Muslims in the *banlieues* was the intensity of his convictions.

Andrew Hussey, the British scholar in Paris, described the intoxicating, mystical quality of jihadism. "It's not an ideology of social conditions," he said. "This is not about poverty, this is not about improving people's conditions. It's about hatred, to some extent. Purification." He likened it to the Fascism of the nineteen-thirties. Jihadism doesn't have the contours of ordinary politics. "This will turn you from 'I am nothing' to 'I should be everything,'" Hussey said. Jihadism attracted both wealthy insiders like bin Laden and poor outsiders like Coulibaly. It was "a floating ideology, like the

cloud—you've just got to lock onto it."

I asked Stéphane to describe the injustice that Coulibaly was reacting to.

"Injustice toward Muslims."

Injustice toward Muslims led Stéphane straight to the Jews. They were, he believed, a privileged community in France. They exploited their historical tragedy and French guilt to acquire power. He pointed out that in Drancy, another *banlieue* in the 93, a memorial museum stands across from the *cité* that had been France's main transit center for Jews destined for concentration camps. "But they don't recognize the slavery that there was in Haiti, in Africa, everywhere," he said. The Shoah was a crime. "But why recognize one and not another? You have to be equal. We say '*égalité, fraternité!*'"

The crime of slavery couldn't be acknowledged, because of the vast fortunes made from it. France had given money to Israel as compensation for the French role in the Holocaust—imagine what it would cost to make reparations for slavery! Coulibaly had chosen his target carefully, Stéphane said: "It's a symbol, to say that, with all the injustice here, stop focusing on the threats to one religion."

I asked why Coulibaly hadn't directed his anger at a church, given that most of France's citizens are Catholic. "Because France isn't controlled by the Christians," Stéphane said. He claimed that France's tiny population of Jews controls the National Assembly, the media, and the banks. The Prime Minister, Manuel Valls, is married to a Jew, and, according to Stéphane, that was why he went on TV after the attacks and said, "France without Jews is not France." Valls didn't say, "France isn't France without Muslims."

Stéphane had only praise for Marine Le Pen, the leader of the far-right National Front. "The real French, *Français de souche*, they see that France is now controlled by the Jews," he said. I asked if Le Pen, who is known for having anti-immigrant views, posed a threat to French Muslims. "When I see Valls, I think Islamophobe," Stéphane said. "Marine Le Pen, I think pure French who wants to give everything to the French. Understand?"

"Does that include you?"

"Me? I'm French." Stéphane showed me his identity card. "Lots of Muslims are going to vote for Marine Le Pen." I had heard this from others, and some

political data bore it out. "You know what they say—the enemies of my enemies are my friends."

Ben Ahmed had known Stéphane for years, and had admired that he cared enough about kids in the *cités* to volunteer his time and help. His successful business also offered inspiration to *banlieue* residents. But after the January attacks they argued. Stéphane insisted that *Charlie Hebdo* was Islamophobic, and Ben Ahmed thought that he was implying that the staffers might have deserved their fate. The argument upset Ben Ahmed deeply.

Last summer's war in Gaza provoked widespread demonstrations in France, and some turned violent and explicitly anti-Semitic, with attacks on synagogues and kosher shops. One day in August, Ben Ahmed was driving home from Bondy's city hall when he heard someone shout, "Dirty Jew!" He stopped. A man in a kippah was walking away from another man.

"Dirty asshole!" Ben Ahmed yelled at the man who had hurled the insult. It was someone he knew, and the man, seeing him, looked surprised, saying, "Hey, why are you talking like that?"

"When you respect him, I'll respect you," Ben Ahmed said.

The anti-Semite walked away. The Jew thanked Ben Ahmed. "People are making an *amalgame*," he said. In the *banlieues*, French Jews were commonly conflated with Israelis.

"Do you often get insulted?" Ben Ahmed asked.

"No, it's the first time. It's the war."

"No, it's just an asshole," Ben Ahmed said. "A visible minority, that's all."

Ben Ahmed was being too sanguine. If there were only around three thousand potential jihadists in France, there were far more anti-Semites—many of them *Français de souche*. A generation ago, Muslims and Jews lived together in the *banlieues* with the sociability of immigrant neighbors. Today, few Jews remain in the *banlieues*, and those who do downplay their identity. A friend of Ben Ahmed's said that her Jewish friends tell their children not to wear the kippah outside.

The old anti-Semitism of the French right and the newer immigrant strain were united in 2008, when Jean-Marie Le Pen, the founder of the National Front,

became godfather to the third child of Dieudonné M'bala M'bala, the French-Cameroonian comedian, who turns Jew-baiting into lucrative entertainment. Dieudonné has an avid following in the *banlieues*—Stéphane's views about Jews could have been lifted from a Dieudonné monologue. Unless you're already on his team, Dieudonné is distinctly unfunny. His 2012 film, "The Anti-Semite," begins with a mock silent movie, with jaunty piano accompaniment, in which Dieudonné plays an American soldier who's just liberated Auschwitz. (If only historical ignorance were the movie's main failing.) A grovelling prisoner shows him around the camp. Inside a gas chamber, Dieudonné dabs his neck with Zyklon B, as if it were cologne; in the crematorium, he mistakes children's remains for chicken bones. When he sits in a leather armchair, the prisoner tells him, "Careful, you're sitting on my grandma!"

Dieudonné has spread anti-Semitism beyond extremist circles into popular culture. In Montreuil, I met a restaurant health inspector, Saïd Allam, who is a fan. "Dieudonné is the same as *Charlie Hebdo*—it's satire," Allam said. "He does sketches to make people laugh at Jews, *Charlie Hebdo* does cartoons of the Prophet to make people laugh—it's the same thing." After the massacres, Dieudonné wrote on his Facebook page, with typical slyness, "I feel I'm Charlie Coulibaly." In response, the authorities prosecuted him for supporting terrorism, and he's been convicted several times for inciting racial hatred; this has led his admirers to accuse the government of a double standard. "People say, 'In killing *Charlie Hebdo* you killed freedom of expression,'" Allam said. "But you already killed freedom of expression in sending Dieudonné to court." Complaints about double standards displaced the horror of the killings with a more comfortable sense of victimization. The argument that *Charlie* attacks religious politics, whereas Dieudonné goes after Jews, was far too subtle for the fraught atmosphere that prevailed after January 7th. So was the notion that hate-speech laws are inherently problematic, not least because they're bound to inspire charges of selective application.

Ben Ahmed detested Dieudonné. "He's the only comedian who could gather in one room Islamophobes, anti-Semites, and anti-élites, and make them

all laugh," he said. "Not because it's funny, but out of hatred."

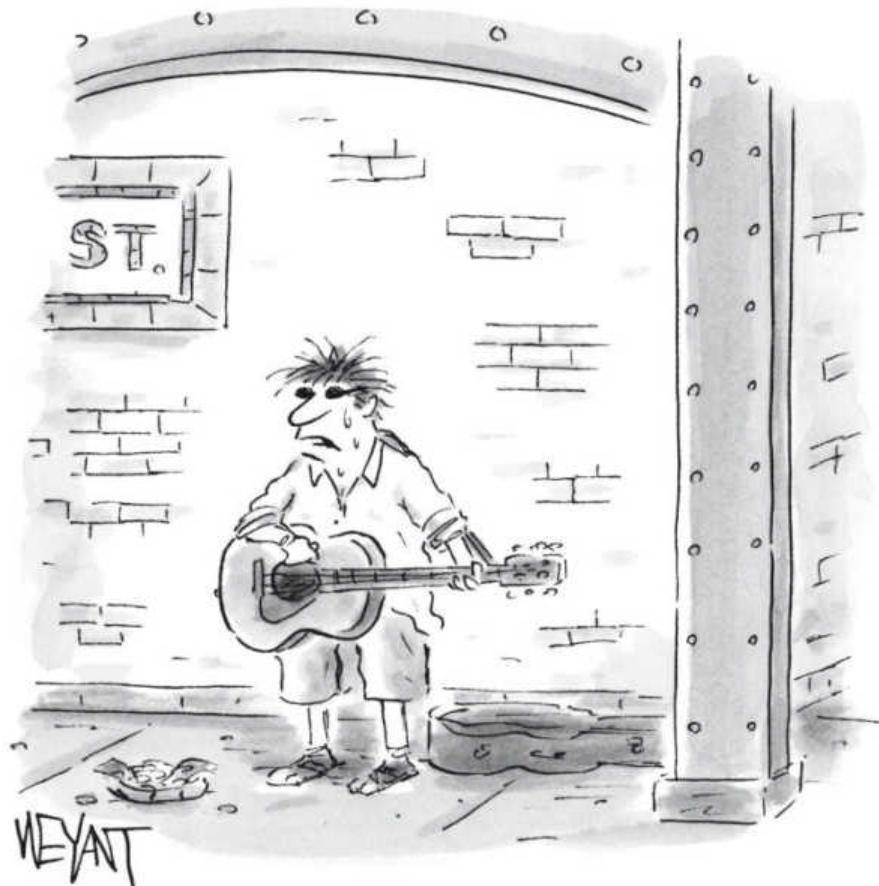
In 2006, a multiracial gang led by Yousouf Fofana, a criminal of Ivorian descent, kidnapped a Jewish cell-phone salesman named Ilan Halimi and took him to a *cité* south of Paris. The gang wanted ransom money. According to an associate of the gang, Fofana believed that the state considered him a slave, and that "Jews were kings, because they ate the state's money." Fofana, assuming that all Jews were rich, demanded four hundred and fifty thousand euros. But Halimi's family couldn't afford this, and the kidnappers tortured Halimi—with punches, lit cigarettes, acid, and, finally, knives.

After twenty-four days, Halimi was found, naked and mutilated, tied to a tree in a park south of Paris. He died en route to the hospital. During his long agony, at least fifty people in the *cité*—from gang members to neighbors—knew that something was going on, but no one called the police.

In a sense, the Halimi case was even more troubling than the January attacks. Because so many residents had sanctioned the violence, it suggested that lawlessness and hate had become endemic in the *banlieues*. Marc Weitzmann, a novelist who is writing a book about French anti-Semitism, said that, in the *banlieues*, a hatred of Jews "is in the background of the values they grow up with—it's ready to be activated as soon as they move from nihilistic delinquency to the search for meaning." For some residents, anti-Semitism can be the path toward radicalism.

Ben Ahmed said that he had two jobs in the 93: "to correct bad ideas in religion, and to end the stigmatization of that religion." It was a difficult balancing act. What if correcting bad ideas led to more stigmatization of Islam? For example, what should one call the religious ideas that, according to Stéphane, had given Amedy Coulibaly the courage to act?

Allam, the restaurant health inspector from Montreuil, lamented the fact that the killings were labelled "an Islamist act." He added, "It's very, very serious to say that, because it implicates a religion in murderous acts." If a blond man killed cartoonists for caricaturing blonds, he argued, people would call him crazy. "And a guy who kills people



"This next song is also about air-conditioning."

in the name of religion is a crazy man."

But the words "Islamic" and "Islamist" are not the same, and allow a crucial political distinction to be made between ordinary believers and ideologues—a distinction that protects Muslims from being equated with jihadists. Nevertheless, the wound of exclusion has festered in French Muslims for so long that the subject of Islamist terrorism is almost too sensitive to touch. An honest conversation about it would require a degree of trust that hardly exists.

One evening, Ben Ahmed prepared dinner at the house of his next-door neighbor, Valérie Tabet, a widowed piano teacher whose daughter attends the same school as Ben Ahmed's kids. The two families are close. Tabet, who has pale skin and short, dark-blond hair, told me that it's no longer safe for young children to be out alone on the streets of the 93, and Ben Ahmed has become a kind of father figure to her daughter. While Ben Ahmed poured crêpe batter onto a griddle in the Tabets' dining room, he and Valérie dis-

cussed how someone becomes a terrorist.

Ben Ahmed said, "I have the impression in fact that it's rather simple, how these people can flip from one day to the next."

"It isn't from one day to the next," Tabet said.

"For me, it's a question of people who either are psychologically ill, maybe a little crazy," Ben Ahmed said. "These people are very *fragile*, and at a given moment they're recruited by people—"

"There's too many jihadis for me to agree with you," Tabet interrupted. "The Kouachi brothers were *fragile* in their makeup—a lack of bearings, a lack of education, a lack of a vision of life, and later that leads to violence—but I don't agree that they were nuts."

Ben Ahmed said that this wasn't what he meant. In addition to the psychiatric cases, there were the psychologically weak, like the Kouachis: "These people would have got in a fight on the street for nothing, for a parking place." He added, "Coulibaly, he scares me a bit, because his

family life was more normal." Somehow, Coulibaly was indoctrinated, and then he found it all too easy to find weapons.

"It's very easy to get them," Tabet agreed. "But there's a lot of people who are made *fragile* by society, because there's not enough work for everyone, because of social problems and all that. But what I see is that there's a point in common among those people—they're Muslims." She added quickly, "And it's not to point a finger, because I mean the potential terrorists. But the problem for me is what they hear in the mosques, in small groups." She spoke of radical imams preaching hate.

Ben Ahmed said that Tabet was simply repeating what she'd heard in the media.

"But *someone* indoctrinates them."

"The people who do that are in a network, but not in a network you would call Muslim," Ben Ahmed said. "Not in the mosque." He searched for the name of Coulibaly's recruiter in jail. "Djamel Beghal. He isn't an imam."

"You can't say that there aren't people who use religion to attract these youths."

"You say 'people,' sure, but you also said 'imams.' I'm not saying they don't exist, but you're generalizing from the exception."

"I'm saying there are many reasons, and

the point in common is these are young Muslims. And that means something—it means that they're using religion."

Ben Ahmed seemed to be afraid that if he accepted Tabet's view he would end up vindicating the Islamophobes. He couldn't cross that line. The two friends were on the verge of an argument that might inflict lasting hurts.

"Your opinion is interesting," Ben Ahmed said. "The thing is, I'm convinced that this doesn't really happen in the mosques. It's in prison."

"Yes, that's certain," Tabet said.

"And there are people who come to the mosques to talk with some of them and succeed in capturing them, on the side."

"*Voilà.*"

They had found just enough common ground to move on.

More than fifteen hundred French citizens have left to join the Islamic State—a quarter of the European total. Around two hundred of them have returned to France. A growing number of these new recruits have no connection to the *banlieues*. According to Farhad Khosrokhavar, the majority of French Muslims going to Syria are now middle-class youths, some of them white converts to Islam, and an increasing percentage of them female. They come from big cities and small towns. "They do not be-

long to broken families," Khosrokhavar said. Their radicalization can happen in a very short time, a matter of weeks, usually through social media. They go to the Middle East because they're moved by the plight of fellow-Muslims. Once there, some are shocked by the Islamic State's violence and try to return home; others are seduced by it.

A few days before the January attacks, Hayat Boumeddiene, Coulibaly's wife, flew from Madrid to Turkey, then crossed into Syria. A security camera at the Istanbul airport captured her entry into Turkey, alongside a young man with a thin beard, his long black hair tied back in a bun. He was a twenty-three-year-old from the 93 named Mehdi Belhoccine. His older brother, Mohamed, had become radicalized through the Internet around 2009, and afterward relayed messages for a network of French jihadists headed for central Asia. Mohamed and Mehdi were now believed to be in Syria. The brothers had been excellent students—Mohamed had done advanced studies in mine engineering, Mehdi in electronic mechanics—and were from a middle-class family who lived in a private house. Ben Ahmed knew their mother, who worked with him at Bondy's city hall. "Very nice lady," he said. "It's too, too sad."

Sylvine Thomassin, the mayor of Bondy, told me, "I had a clear view of jihadism before January—families with educational deficiencies, parents who hadn't done well, kids failing at school." It was, she said, a weirdly "reassuring diagram," because it made the pathway of radicalism seem predictable. Then came the stunning news of the Belhoccine brothers' connection to the authors of the Paris attacks. The mayor, who knew the Belhoccines well, now found it impossible to come up with a profile. "Our Muslim fellow-citizens live overwhelmingly in public housing, and the majority are confronted with the same problems as those who are radicalized, and yet they aren't radicalized," she said. "So the problem definitely isn't the *banlieues*. Perhaps it's the hypersensitivity of a very small number to this discourse around them."

Xavier Nogueras, a defense lawyer in Paris, represents twenty French citizens accused of jihadism. A few of his clients are violent and dangerous, he said, but many went to Syria out of idealism, wanting to defend other Muslims against the



"Let me try mine. It's made in China."

Assad regime and build an Islamic state. He argued that such people pose no threat to France and that the state shouldn't permanently embitter them with years of detention. Nogueras resisted tracing his clients' motives to social conditions in the *banlieues*. Few have criminal backgrounds; some had well-paid jobs in large French companies. "The most surprising thing to me is their immense humanity," Nogueras said. He finds jihadists more interesting than the drug dealers and robbers he's represented. "They have more to say—many more ideas. Their sacred book demands the application of Sharia, which tells them to cover their wives, not to live in secularism. And we are in a country that inevitably stigmatizes them, because it's secular. They don't feel at home here."

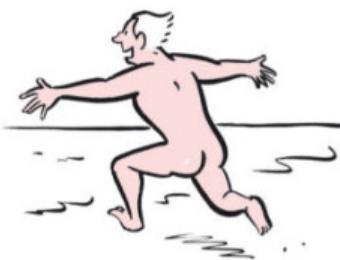
I found the lawyer's distinction between jihadism at home and abroad less than reassuring. Coulibaly's faith could have led him to kill people in Paris or in Syria; violence driven by ideology could happen anywhere. The "idealism" of clients motivated to make Sharia universal law is, in some ways, more worrying than simple thuggery: even if France dedicates itself urgently to making its Muslims full-fledged children of the republic, a small minority of them will remain, on principle, irreconcilable.

On a commercial street in the 93, in a sparsely furnished apartment with no name on the buzzer, Sonia Imloul, a social worker of Algerian origin, meets with families of radicalized young people. Cases come to her through police departments or through government agencies that have been contacted by the families, on a hot line. Sitting down at the kitchen table, Imloul lit a cigarette and said, "I've had children of doctors, journalists, generals. I'd say it's almost a national epidemic." She remains "super-vigilant" about her fourteen-year-old son.

Imloul's method is to maintain a young person's ties to his or her family before an "initiation journey" occurs. "The family often has the answer, without knowing it," she said. Radicalization has been a phenomenon in France for thirty years; devising a proper solution may take another thirty. The problem is acute in France, Imloul said, partly because the republic's rigid secularism leaves no room for serious discussions of religious identity. "With a radical, if you don't talk to

him about religion, you can't talk about anything," she said. France has taken an entirely punitive approach to the problem. Imloul's "prevention cell" is the only such program in the country.

The January attacks created a genuine sense of crisis, and Prime Minister Valls made passionate speeches condemning the "geographic, social, ethnic apartheid" that denies French citizens in places like the 93 full entry into the republic. Thomassin, the mayor of Bondy



(and Ben Ahmed's boss), showed me a map to pinpoint where high-rise *cités* are being torn down and replaced by smaller buildings surrounded by green space. The goal was to encourage a new spirit of neighborliness. The mayor of Le Blanc-Mesnil, another *banlieue* in the 93, described a similar plan, along New Urbanist lines, that allowed public-housing renters to become homeowners. I got the feeling that, after decades of denial, France was now playing catch-up.

"We're at war, but not against a religion," Valls said. France was "at war to defend our values, which are universal." He urged French Muslims to see it as their struggle, too. "It is a war against terrorism and radical Islamism, against everything that aims to break our solidarity, liberty, fraternity."

For two or three decades, a soft multiculturalism has been the default politics of the governing left, while France's silent majority, more and more culturally insecure, has moved rightward, and the *banlieues* have been allowed to rot. The National Front voter and the radicalized Muslim feel equally abandoned. According to the political scientist Laurent Bouvet, the January attacks, like an underwater bomb, brought all these trends to the surface. "Secularism is our common good," Bouvet said. "If there is a common French identity, it's not an identity of roots, it's not a Christian identity, it's not cathedrals, it's not the white race. It's a political project." He went on,

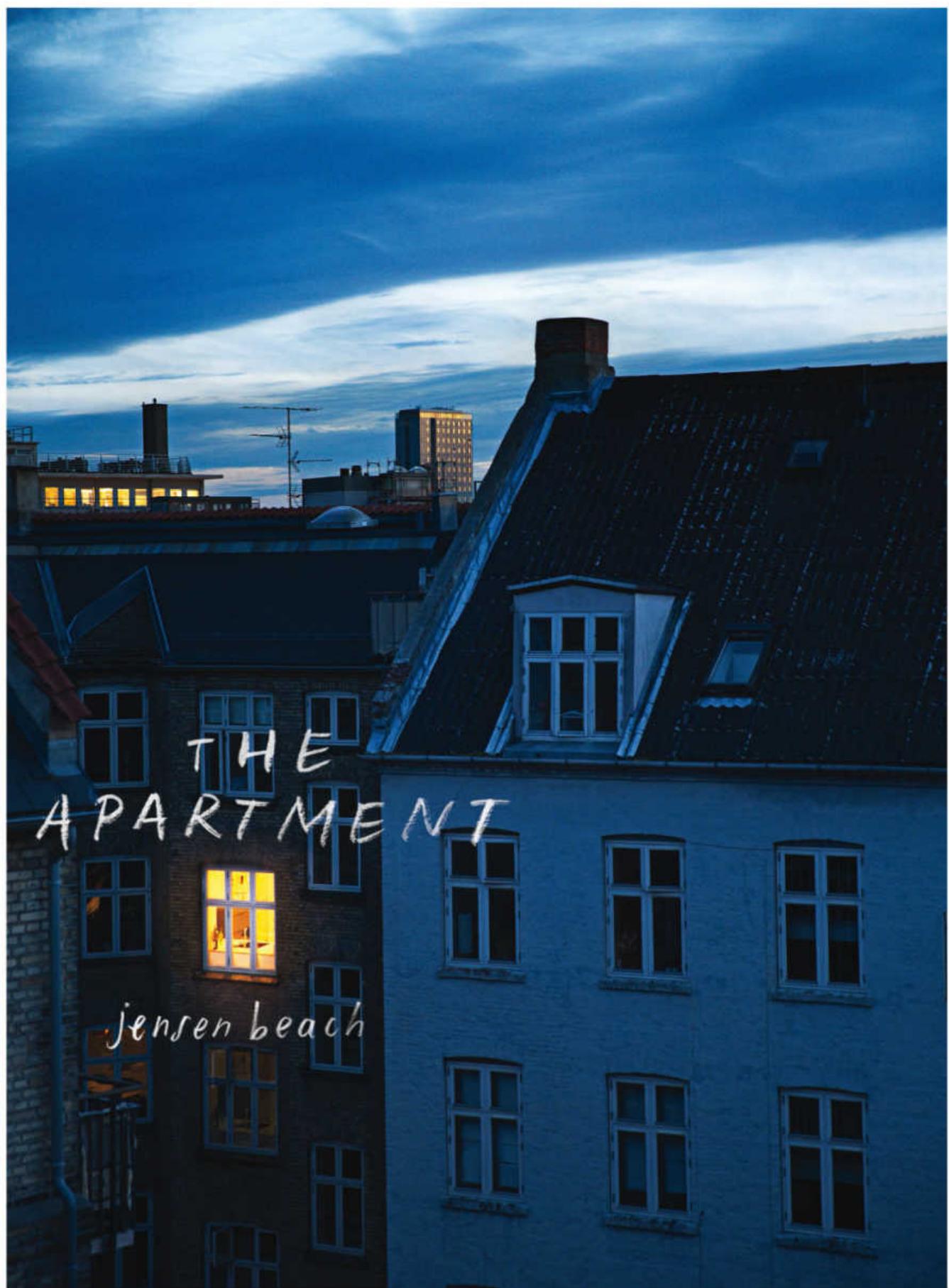
"If we let the National Front define French identity, it's going to be by race, by blood, by religion."

France has an official "rapporteur général" for secularism, and currently it is an earnest young Socialist politician named Nicolas Cadène. He told me that France had failed to create a national story that included all its citizens. The shock of the attacks and the divisive fallout made a new approach imperative, and he sketched a program of reform starting with the schools: explain the meaning of secularism while teaching "impartial, neutral" facts about different religions as a way to make students more tolerant and critical-minded; integrate more colonial history into the curriculum; encourage the teaching of Arabic in public schools, so that this wasn't left to madrassas. Some of these changes will be instituted this fall.

Jean-Pierre Filiu, the Arabist, told me that, for more than a decade, Sciences Po—the social-science institution where he teaches—has been admitting a portion of each new class on the basis of slightly different entrance criteria. French law forbids discrimination by ethnicity or religion, so Sciences Po uses geography instead. "We want to bring in students from the 93," Filiu said. "I've been sitting on those juries, and the *banlieues* are among the best, because you have *la niaque*"—heart, a fighting instinct. I thought of what such a chance would have meant to Ben Ahmed.

Elections in France's hundred departments were scheduled for late March. Ben Ahmed decided to run as a Socialist to represent Bobigny. When his campaign posters were defaced with swastikas and racist graffiti—"Dirty Arab"—he ignored it. He spent nights and weekends leafleting and shaking hands in his old hangouts. The residents greeted him as one of them, but many thought that voting was pointless. He told his most resistant neighbors—the old women in full hijab, the jobless men at the corner bar, J.-P. and his gang—that they couldn't abstain if they wanted to be equal citizens.

Ben Ahmed came in fourth. Even the candidate from the National Front beat him. The Socialists, being the party in power, did badly almost everywhere. The extreme right continued to rise. But Ben Ahmed wasn't discouraged. He believed in politics, and he believed in France. He would try again. ♦



HAND LETTERING BY EVA BLACK

Louise knew by the new name on the call box that someone had moved in. She'd seen lights and movement in the apartment, which was across the courtyard from her and Martin, for the past few days. The new name confirmed it. Someone had finally bought the place. The name had been typed on a small piece of green paper and taped to the call box beside the apartment's number. Louise had once known a man with the name Jahani. Arman had been a doctoral student in French the year she started at Stockholm University. He'd taught the conversation tutorial she took fall term. She looked at the green paper again. All that was so long ago. He was the second man she'd slept with. Martin still didn't know about it. She checked her watch. She was on her way out to meet her son, Jonas, for lunch. The metro she wanted to take was due in ten minutes. Arman had come from Iran to study, or maybe he'd come to escape the revolution. She couldn't recall the details now. The years merged into one another. A bus rushed past on the street, and the blast of hot air stung her neck.

Jonas wanted to try a sushi restaurant he'd heard about. They took a table on the patio. It was September but very warm out. She let him order. Arman had died in the early nineties. He was a professor of French at the university by then, and his death had been noted briefly in the culture section of *DN*. One of his books about French cognates had caused a minor controversy. His obituary had mentioned two children, she believed, a daughter and a son. Maybe one of them had moved into her building.

"News from home," she said after the waitress had brought their drinks—water for Jonas, white wine for Louise. Jonas hadn't lived with Louise and Martin for more than a decade, but she still thought of the apartment as his home. "The apartment across the courtyard finally sold."

"The neighbor who died?" he said. "Dad mentioned it." Martin served on the co-op board and would have known about the sale. He rarely shared such information with Louise.

"That's right," she said. "Barbro Ekman. Her children had been trying to sell the place for months. You can't

imagine the smell when the body was first discovered." The apartment, which was one floor lower than her and Martin's, had been empty since Barbro Ekman died, shortly before Christmas the previous year. Her body was found only after Martin, who'd gone up to the attic storage area on that side of the building to retrieve a box of decorations, smelled the decomposition. The air was sour and rotten, even two floors up. He'd been upset that no one in the building had noticed for so long, that no one who lived closer to Barbro Ekman had been alarmed by the overwhelming stench. "They're all so selfish," he'd said. But Louise suspected he was really only upset that he'd been the one to make the discovery.

Jonas took a drink of his water. "Gruesome," he said.

It had been snowing the day the cleaning company came. She'd watched from her kitchen as they worked. They scrubbed walls and floors, removed furniture. They even took some of the fixtures and appliances from the kitchen. The idea that humans are so unclean on the inside had preoccupied Louise for weeks. "Well," she told her son, "I can't imagine what a relief it must be to her family."

"I don't think I ever met that woman," Jonas said. "Not that I remember."

"She was very old," Louise said. She didn't know if he was telling the truth or saying this only to annoy her.

From the bedroom on the courtyard side of their apartment there was a clear view of Barbro Ekman's living room. When Jonas was young, that bedroom had been his. Now Martin used it as an office. She rarely went into the room anymore. Martin was private about so much. "Do you remember the blue light from her window?" she asked Jonas. "How it used to reflect on the flower box?"

"I think so," he said.

"It used to scare you."

He tore open the paper wrapping of the chopsticks, pulled them apart, and rubbed them together to smooth the edges.

"It was so easy to explain," she said. "It was just her television, I always told you. But you never believed me."

The waitress arrived with two rect-

angular plates and set them down in the center of the table. Colorful pieces of fish were arranged on each plate. Louise had tried to listen to what Jonas had ordered for them both and to follow along by looking at the pictures in her own menu, but now that the food had arrived she couldn't tell one piece of fish from another.

Jonas pointed with his chopsticks. "Salmon," he said. "And yellowtail. Whitefish. Eel on this plate here."

She'd always disliked eel. Eels could travel great distances out of the water, and she found this disturbing.

"Who bought the apartment?" Jonas asked.

"I only know a name," Louise said. Arman had been a good teacher. She could still conjugate several French verbs, hear him reading from lists he'd written on the chalkboard: present indicative, present conditional, present subjunctive. She remembered the strangest things. There couldn't be that many Jahanis in Stockholm. Jonas was thirty-four. Would she feel jealous or relieved if the person in the apartment was close to that age?

She watched her son eat.

He talked about a problem at his office. An e-mail had accidentally been sent to the wrong person, and Jonas found this uncomfortably funny. He'd been in his current position for only a year, and everything he said about his job, positive or negative, surged with fresh excitement.

When they finished, Jonas insisted on paying the check. As he was figuring out the tip, she typed an e-mail on her phone reminding herself to deposit money into his account.

She walked him back to work. They said goodbye to each other outside the building's glass-walled entryway. Jonas vanished into the crowd of office workers. It was remarkable how similar to her son they all looked. It had been the same when he was in school. The children were all identical. Hundreds of them crowded the spaces of his childhood. His soccer matches, ski lessons, piano classes. She'd always been at ease with the idea of being the mother of a child who was like everyone else. It was a relief to exist so close to the middle. There were so many fewer risks. She watched the crowd fill

the lobby. They could all be my children, she thought.

She decided to walk home. Systembolaget had a branch near Jonas's office, and she wanted to buy a bottle of wine. It embarrassed her to buy wine more than twice a week from the same Systembolaget, and she'd been to the location closer to her apartment just the day before. Lately, she'd been interested in South African wines. She picked two bottles of a Cabernet that, according to a sign fastened to the shelf in the store, had ranked very highly in a blind taste test. She paid for the wine, and, as she left the store, she looked up and down the street to see if there was anyone who might recognize her. Then she stuffed the bottles into her purse, concealing what wouldn't fit all the way in with her scarf, and walked the rest of the way home.

The green piece of paper was still there on the call box, partly obscuring the name Ekman. One corner of the paper curled outward in the heat. With her fingernail, she started to peel the tape off so that she could reposition it over the paper, but she stopped herself.

The stairwell was dark. Someone on the ground floor was playing music very loudly. The sound faded as she climbed the stairs. By the second floor, she could no longer recognize the song.

She set her purse on the kitchen counter. The bottles clinked. It was

two, according to the oven clock. Martin was at work. That evening he was going out with colleagues to celebrate his retirement. They were taking him to a karaoke bar. She didn't expect him to be home until late. Martin was retiring early. They didn't need the money, and he was bored with work. She opened one of the bottles of wine and poured herself a glass. Sometimes she worried that she was damaging her health. The music was still playing, and it seeped clearly into the kitchen from the open window. She took her wine to the balcony and sat looking out over the courtyard. The curtains in Barbro Ekman's apartment were drawn, and the apartment was dark. She could hear the music from the ground floor. A new song came on, one she recognized. She mouthed along to a few words of the chorus, took a sip of her wine. The wine tasted good, and the song reminded her of somewhere nice. She couldn't place the memory exactly, but it made her think of the outdoors, of a beautiful view. There were trees and snow. Maybe the song had played on the radio frequently during a trip they'd once taken.

In the apartment just below Barbro Ekman's place lived a woman named Johanna. Her two sons were grown now. One of them played ice hockey in America, somewhere in the Southern states, Louise thought—North Carolina, maybe. The other was a law-

yer up north, in Kiruna. Louise remembered when the family had moved in. The boys were so young. That was right before Louise had become pregnant with Jonas. She'd liked the family. She'd helped the boys plant a small herb garden on her balcony, because it faced east and got good morning sun.

Once, about a month before Jonas was born, Johanna had asked Louise to babysit the older of her sons. The younger one was very sick, and Johanna hadn't wanted to take them both to the hospital. Louise wasn't feeling well herself and didn't want to catch whatever the boy had. So she volunteered Martin to go in her place.

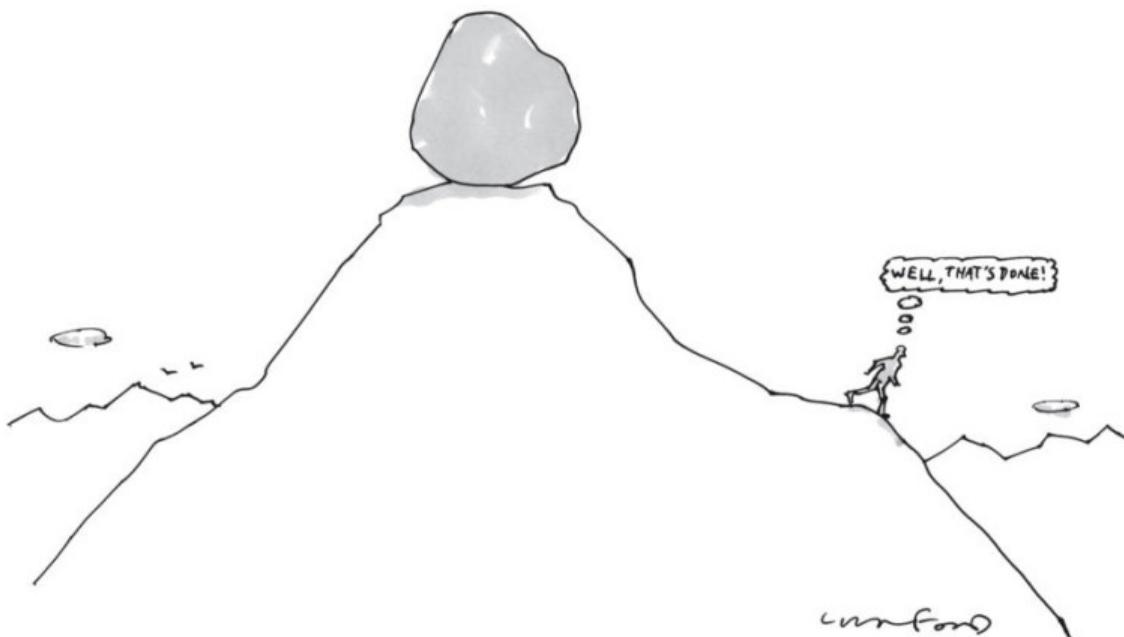
After barely an hour, he came back. She heard his footsteps in the hall outside their apartment. She heard the front door open and Martin's heavy tread as he walked to the bedroom. He was tired, he told her, and had forgotten to take a book to read.

"Who's watching him?" she asked. "Has Johanna come home?" The bed was warm and comfortable, and, silhouetted in the doorway, Martin appeared much larger than he actually was.

"I need to find my book," he said.

"They have books there," she said. "And a television."

"I'm tired, Louise," he said. Then the shadow of her husband stepped out of the doorway and disappeared into the hall. She heard a door open and close, then the airy creak of leather as he



settled into his chair in the living room.

She got out of bed and wrapped herself in her robe. It was the first time she could remember hating her husband. Over the years that had become such a familiar, even comforting, feeling. It was cold out, and she crossed the courtyard as quickly as she could, taking care to avoid an icy patch where the shadow from a first-floor balcony kept the ground wet even in the warmest part of the day.

She could remember so much about that evening, but not what the problem with the younger boy had been. She couldn't recall Johanna's coming home. But she distinctly remembered waking up on Johanna's couch, her throat and stomach on fire with heartburn and hatred for Martin. The next time she saw Johanna, she thought she'd ask her about that night. We all inhabit our memories so differently. Or, rather, our individual memories of shared events can mean such different things. It had something to do with identity, she supposed, but she didn't feel like chasing after the thought any further.

Louise spent the rest of the afternoon on the balcony or else on the narrow, soft couch in the sitting room, reading. Days passed quickly when she drank. By five o'clock, the sun had dipped behind the building to the west, and the temperature dropped. She had nearly finished the first bottle of wine. When her neighbors started to arrive home from their workdays, she went inside and sat at the kitchen island. She was careful about appearances. Sometimes she threw bottles away in her trash, instead of taking them to the recycling, because she didn't want her neighbors to see how much she drank.

She fixed herself something to eat and opened the second bottle of wine. She watched the news while she ate. Dusk settled over the courtyard, and by eight it was dark. She turned the television off and took a thin blanket from the couch and returned to the balcony. She wrapped the blanket around her shoulders. Outside the apartment, she could smell her own inside life sharply on the blanket. The courtyard was dark. She tried to find a pattern in the lit-up windows of the

building opposite. Two dark, one light. Three light, one dark, three light. Lights went on and off, and she could never get past a third position in the pattern and soon gave up trying. Occasionally, the front door would open loudly and slam shut. The hall light switched on, casting a wide square of light into the courtyard. She heard voices, a television, laughter. Barbro Ekman's apartment was still dark.

She was the one who'd ended things



with Arman. She'd got pregnant, and the idea that the baby might be his had frightened her. Of course, the timing wasn't quite right. The last time she'd slept with Arman was weeks before the likely conception date. She'd understood this with relief when the midwife had circled the estimated due date on the colorful chart she held in front of Louise and Martin in a cramped exam room at the thirteen-week checkup. Louise felt as if she'd risked something catastrophic and survived. She hadn't told Arman that she was pregnant. It was better that he didn't know. Just after the birth, the first time she held Jonas against her chest, feeling the sticky wetness of her own blood on his body, she'd touched his hair, dark, curled wet with blood and amniotic fluid. Until the midwife washed him and gave him back to her, she was terrified that perhaps Jonas was Arman's after all, that she'd miscalculated some crucial fact.

The heavy front door of the building creaked open. The light in the hall came on. It spilled out into the courtyard, revealing a chair and the sharp contrasts of shadowed corners. The door slammed shut. She listened to footsteps in the stairwell. Her wineglass was empty, and she got up to fill it. In the warmth of the apartment, she felt a chill at her feet. She filled her glass and held the bottle up in front of her to check

how much wine was left. Just over half.

She took the bottle with her back to the balcony and sat in the darkness. She was warm and didn't need the blanket. The lights in Barbro Ekman's apartment had been turned on. Through the curtains, she saw movement. She watched the windows closely. There were three, spaced evenly from one end of the building to the other. Kitchen, living room, bedroom. There was a bathroom and a small dining room on the other side of the apartment. She knew this because she'd once been inside, years before, to help Barbro Ekman move a painting from the hallway to the bedroom. Barbro Ekman had been dead for eight months. She was a young ghost. Louise watched the figure move from window to window, its dark shape heavy in the living room, where the light was brightest, faint in the bedroom.

Martin wouldn't be home for hours. He never came home when he said he was going to. She couldn't remember how Arman Jahani had died. Probably some disease. Most people die in unassuming ways like that. Quiet but painful struggles consisting of medicines and doctor visits, hope established and quickly abandoned. It was so boring. Better to die as Barbro Ekman had. By the time Jonas was two or three, she'd nearly forgotten that she once thought he might be Arman's son. She couldn't remember what it had been like to feel any guilt about it. The wine was good, but it had left a sticky film in her mouth, and she didn't want the rest. She got up to find something else to drink.

In the kitchen, she poured herself a glass of Scotch from the bottle that Martin saved for guests and special occasions. She didn't like Scotch, particularly, but this tasted good. It stung her throat. She coughed, took another sip. What would it have been like to raise Arman's son? Without imagining any details, she felt the idea forming, shapely and full, and was able to hold it firmly in her mind for just a moment. But did it matter? Arman was dead. That was the simplest truth of all. Would Martin have figured it out? He'd been a good father, a little distant, a little too rooted in his work, perhaps, but that was normal. Jonas



"Yuck! Look at all that planet lice down there!"

had had a good childhood. She was happy she hadn't had to carry a lie as big as his life all this time.

She emptied her glass, winced, searched the burn of the Scotch in her throat for pleasure. On the balcony, she filled the empty glass with the rest of the wine and sat in her chair and drank. In Barbro Ekman's apartment, Arman's real child was alive. It was funny how her path and Arman's—such a ridiculous metaphor—had converged. He would have found it amusing. She was sure of it.

The figure appeared in the kitchen, pulled the curtains to one side, and opened the window. Arman had a daughter. Louise watched her sit at the table, the light from the lamp forming a bright circle at its center. She was drinking something from a mug. Coffee or tea, maybe wine, Louise thought.

She and Martin had lived in the building longer than everyone but grouchy old Jan Lindblom down on the ground floor, and Barbro Ekman, of course, before she died. Back in the kitchen, Louise poured another finger of whiskey. It tasted a little like wine, but it wasn't bad. In the cup-

board, she found an unopened package of cookies. Shortbread, the kind Martin liked.

The stairwell was dark. She took the first steps carefully, her hand against the smooth wall as a guide. As she descended, her eyes adjusted and the moonlit courtyard cast its light up into the stairwell, and eventually she could walk without fear of falling. Outside, she looked up at her balcony. The light from her kitchen was inviting, soft orange and yellow. Warm colors. She would never do this sober.

The name was on the mail slot on the door. Jahani. She knocked. Footsteps. The young woman answered. She was beautiful, as far from the middle as Louise's son was near it. "Hello," she said.

"I live here," Louise said.

"I'm sorry?" the young woman said.

"I meant I live in this complex, and I wanted to welcome you."

"That's very nice," the young woman said. "Thank you so much." She looked back into the apartment. Louise peered in, too. There were open boxes, a tilting stack of blankets and towels, an empty bookcase turned at a funny angle at the end of the hall. "I was

unpacking." She smiled. Louise could tell that she was embarrassed.

Louise smiled back and didn't budge. "You've just moved in," she said.

"Officially tomorrow," the young woman said. "Getting a head start. Sara," she said, and held out her hand.

Louise took it. "Louise," she said. It was difficult to recall exactly what Arman had looked like. Perhaps she could see him in Sara. But had he been tall? Sara was tall, taller than Louise. He'd had dark hair, and she remembered him as very thin, but also strong. Sinewy was the word for it. He'd had thick veins on his arms. "I live just over there," she said. She held the box of cookies out to indicate the direction of her apartment.

Sara looked at her.

"Oh, listen to me," Louise said, handing the cookies to Sara. "These are for you. Welcome."

"You didn't have to do that," Sara said.

"Of course," Louise said. "I wanted to. You're one of us now."

Sara smiled.

Louise's face and the top of her chest were warm. She touched her fingertips to her throat. "You'll like living here," she said.

"I think so, too," Sara said.

Louise didn't believe in fate. Every morning she woke up with the thought that that day would be the one when something terrible was destined to happen. She did this because she knew it was impossible to predict what was coming for each of us. Whatever she believed would happen that day she knew would not, owing to our inability to know the future. Lately, she'd been imagining horrific things. Car accidents, robberies, disease. Martin thought it was unhealthy and told her so frequently.

"This is a good area," she said to the young woman. "We've been here for years. It's very safe."

Sara fidgeted at the door. "I like this neighborhood. I always have." She held the cookies in front of her, took a step back into the apartment, smiled politely, and put her hand on the door.

"You could be my daughter," Louise said.

"Excuse me?" Sara said. She let her hand fall from the door.

"I could have been your mother. I knew your father before you were born."

Sara squinted a little, turned her head slightly to the left. "You've mistaken me for someone else."

"Your father and I were friends," Louise said. "We had a relationship."

"I think you've mistaken me for someone."

Louise reached out and touched Sara's arm. "It was a long time ago. I was in love with him."

Sara smiled, and in the smile Louise, even drunk, located judgment. This was how Jonas looked at her; Martin, too. The same sad eyes, the narrow, thin-lipped smile. They pitied her, thought she was ridiculous, incapable, unwell. She hated them all. "A woman died here," she said.

Sara started to push the door closed. "Thank you again," she said. "I really should get back to unpacking."

"She was very old, the woman who lived here before you," Louise said, stepping forward until she'd nearly entered the apartment. "Her body was found just before Christmas last year. I think she had a stroke."

"I'm sorry," Sara said.

"I thought you should know," Louise said. "I'd want to know." She put her hand on the door.

Sara looked at her, and Louise saw the pity again. "Are you feeling all right?" Sara said.

"Her name was Barbro," Louise said. She closed her eyes. "The woman who used to live here. She was very old. I think that's the best way to go, don't you? In your sleep, just like that. I don't want to sit around waiting for it."

"Can I help you get back home?" Sara said. "Do you think you'll make it on your own?"

"They've cleaned your apartment. You can't imagine the smell. Martin told me about it."

"Do you need help walking back?"

Louise concentrated on holding her head as still as possible. "No," she said. "It's just over there."

In the courtyard, she looked up at Barbro Ekman's apartment. The blinds were drawn. The light in the front room had been turned out. She was cold. She turned on the light in the stairwell, listened to her shoes click

and shuffle against the hard stone. From one of the ground-floor apartments, loud applause and laughter from a television mocked her. She steadied herself with a hand on the cold wall.

She sat at the kitchen island, on one of the tall stools, the wobbly one, and finished the food she'd prepared earlier. She ate most of a piece of bread with too much butter and drank more Scotch. Arman Jahani had not had a daughter. She was sure of this. It was late, and she was tired. Martin would be home soon, and she wanted to be in bed before he arrived. She stood up to pour herself a glass of milk. Milk soothed her stomach. She would be hungover in the morning, but she didn't care. She reached for a glass on the far side of the counter, and, as she leaned forward, she brushed the plate off the counter and to the floor. Shattered fragments of china pricked her bare feet.

The plate was not a plate. It was only dozens of pieces of thick ceramic, the patterned lines and shapes disrupted, taken apart, put back together to form something new. She got down on her knees and moved the largest piece to one side and began to place the smaller pieces on top. The edges were sharp, and she held each piece as tenderly as possible.

She knew it was Martin before he even opened the door. And when he entered the room she didn't need to look up to see that she'd been right. "I've made a mess," she said. She pushed the plate aside and picked up a bit of bread with her fingertips and put the bread in her mouth.

"You don't have to do that," Martin said. "Please. I'll get it later."

"Forgive me."

"I'll help you to bed," Martin said.

"You should have stayed, Martin. You could have stayed. It wasn't difficult." She felt his hand on her head. He probably didn't know what night she was talking about, but that didn't matter. She leaned forward, devoted, filling her mouth with the bread as if she were kneeling at the altar of a darkened church. ♦

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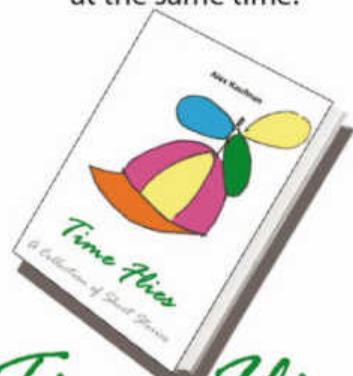
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THE CRITICS



ON TELEVISION

LITTLE BOXES

Home truths on “Show Me a Hero” and “Orange Is the New Black.”

BY EMILY NUSSBAUM

In a scene midway through HBO’s “Show Me a Hero,” one that functions as a metonym for the series, a Yonkers city councilman named Hank Spallone—played with toothpick-chewing gusto by Alfred Molina—and a photographer drive through the Schlobohm housing projects. They’re hunting for images to inflame voters: lurid proof that poor black people come from “another culture.” But their presence also changes what they see. When their sedan lingers, two giggly teen-age girls go silent, then shoot their middle fingers up in defiance. *Click* goes the camera. Meanwhile, a weary older woman walks by, lugging groceries. The photographer raises his lens—but then doesn’t bother.

Written by David Simon and Bill Zorzi, directed with unshowy simplicity by Paul Haggis, and based on the excellent nonfiction book by Lisa Belkin, “Show Me a Hero” is an attempt to re-focus that picture—to find beauty in daily struggles and civic courage, not in bad-boy fantasies. The six-episode mini-series, set in the nineteen-eighties and nineties, is a dramatization of the battle to desegregate Yonkers, punctuated by swigs of Maalox. As anyone who followed the real-life story knows—don’t Google it if you don’t want spoilers—it has one happy ending and one very sad one. (The title comes from F. Scott Fitzgerald: “Show me a hero, and I’ll write you a tragedy.”) It’s the latest effort by Simon, the creator of “The Wire” and “Treme,” to forge an effective model for the message drama, with plots torn not

from the headlines but from the op-ed page. Well cast, solidly structured, and emotionally stirring, the show is as sincere as the Bruce Springsteen songs that make up its score, a ballad of pragmatism with a passionate heart. And, no, that’s not code for “boring.” The series builds and deepens, stanza by stanza, and then it soars.

To a large degree, this is because of Oscar Isaac, who plays Nick Wasicsko, in a star performance agile enough to elevate scenes that might veer into agitprop. When “Show Me a Hero” begins, Wasicsko, a former cop, a flirt in a thick Pacino mustache, gets picked by the Democrats to run for mayor, challenging the incumbent, who lost support over a judicial decree to build low-income housing. Wasicsko tells voters that he’ll fight the ruling, then wins big, becoming the nation’s youngest mayor. Only then must he face facts: any court appeal is doomed, and, anyway, would bankrupt the city. Somehow, he needs to make this unpopular plan work.

Right away, the white residents who elected Wasicsko turn against him. Civic meetings boil over into near-riots. Former supporters spit in his face. They rock his car, then shatter the windshield—and these scenes, filmed in the locations where the events the show is based on occurred, feel wild and kinetic, placing us right in the action. But Wasicsko barrels forward. What begins as practicality evolves into spiny principle: he’s a dreamy realist, a civic puzzle-solver, which proves to be its own kind of ide-

alism. He builds bridges as they get wiped out. As his troubles increase, Wasicsko’s eyes become wells of need: he’s diligent, canny, a good listener, but he’s hooked on adoration.

The show’s wonkiest policy debates are also its liveliest scenes, as the white men who run the city wheedle to get that mysterious force worshipped by Donald Trump: leverage. In one scene, the city planner Oscar Newman (Peter Riegert, in an Amish beard) proposes scattering just a few town houses within each white neighborhood, to discourage the “criminal element.” An A.C.L.U. lawyer (the appealingly shaggy Jon Bernthal—few shows have made such a nostalgic case for men’s hair of the eighties) calls this racist. Newman doubles down, citing research. “Public-housing residents are no different than any other renters,” he argues later. “They will jealously guard and maintain what’s theirs.” He fights for specific features, like front yards facing the street. It’s clear that Simon and Zorzi are in Newman’s camp, which favors make-it-work facts over ideology, but the show also respects the debate’s prismatic quality: the judge has his priorities, as does HUD, as do the politicians hedging career bets. Even the bigoted residents, who cloak their fears in talk of property values, are flawed, human, and, in a few cases—as with one resident, played with warm humility by Catherine Keener—capable of change. It’s a dark take on politics, but a bright one on democracy.

If the show has a weak spot, it’s in the depiction of Schlobohm, with its grim canyons of drug dealers and struggling families. In the first few episodes, we get glimpses of four black and Latina women, all single mothers: a teen-ager with a criminal boyfriend; a laborer yearning for the kids she left behind in the Dominican Republic; a young widow; and an elderly health aide gone blind (the terrific LaTanya Richardson Jackson). The performances are solid, the real-life details affecting, but the stories feel stiff, disjointed, their peripheral quality underlined by aesthetic choices. (Springsteen dominates, while hip-hop leaks through doors.) It’s only once we get to the housing lottery that these plots click: there’s uneasy power in a shot of the women’s closed faces beside their kids’ open giddiness, praying for a Golden Ticket,



Show Me a Hero, which David Simon began working on before he made *The Wire*, finds beauty in daily struggles.

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even if that means living among strangers who hate them. It's an ugly numbers game, but it's the only one in town.

In interviews, Simon likes to call himself the "PBS of HBO." And, truly, there's something beautiful and Wasicsko-esque about his dogged desire for TV drama to reflect the best values of journalism. (He's been working on "Show Me a Hero" since before "The Wire," as the subject matter has become ever more relevant.) In an era of sociopaths and conspiracies that go *all the way to the top*, "Show Me a Hero" is less a breakthrough experiment than a refreshing throwback, echoing certain of the grittier, now forgotten network series of TV's early decades, such as the social-worker procedural "East Side/West Side." Simon's shows are unashamed of their mission to educate and to illuminate, and, if advocating for them can make a critic feel as if she were hawking a standing desk, so be it.

But Simon is wrong to suggest that, for viewers, the choices are Yonkers or zombies. The truth is, progressive politics are experiencing a TV boom these days—a revival of the medium's do-gooder legacy—but they're often nested in genres taken less seriously: comedies, shows aimed at women and teens, sci-fi. Take CBS's deceptively procedural-shaped "The Good Wife," which has explored, with surprising granularity, the risks of N.S.A. surveillance and the insidious effects of big money on Democratic politics. Or ABC Family's teen soap "The Fosters," so sharp on judicial issues for kids in the foster system. TV's most nuanced explorations of health care are on BBC's "Call the Midwife," set among Anglican nurse-midwives after the Second World War, and HBO's mordant black comedy "Getting On," about a geriatric ward corroded by for-profit funding. The most vivid critique of capitalism since "The Wire" was HBO's humane "Enlightened"; later, in an entirely different genre, USA's sizzling dystopia "Mr. Robot" picked up that radical thread. These shows make left-wing arguments without the signifiers of TV seriousness: realism, male protagonists, big-name Hollywood directors.

The most striking example is Jenji Kohan's women's-prison series, "Orange Is the New Black," which is so tonally perverse that the Emmys can't figure out whether it's a comedy or a drama. The

third season, currently streaming on Netflix, is both a scathing denunciation of the privatization of the prison system and a voice of advocacy for labor unions—though you'll rarely hear it described that way. With its scenes of shower sex, "Orange Is the New Black" has got the side eye from those who prefer their prison politics straight, so to speak. The characters are demographic cousins of the women on "Show Me a Hero," but they're blown up, not life-size. Still, the show's themes are right out of the Marshall Project: solitary confinement; the joke of a "job fair"; financial corruption, which leaves inmates literally flooded with excrement (a story that reflects a prison where the show is filmed); untreated mental illness; and the fraught "compassionate release" policy of removing elderly inmates. As Simon's shows do, "Orange Is the New Black" draws from nonfiction: one plot, about a mother and daughter, feels inspired by Adrian Nicole LeBlanc's "Random Family." But the series rejects realism, mining instead an outrageousness that verges on the vaudevillian.

The third season begins, in a few early, atypically weak episodes, as the Litchfield Prison is taken over by an outside company, a data-driven corporation of Amazonian proportions. Only gradually do we see the effects of the profit motive. Untrained guards are hired for cheap, while experienced ones become temps. The food is replaced with sickening gruel. "Orange," too, has a brutal lottery scene, in which inmates are randomly assigned to a garment sweatshop. Most provocatively, the show draws parallels between the inmates and the guards, who are trying to unionize.

The season's richest story—a slow-motion collision between the Latina cook Gloria and the trans black hairdresser Sophia—was, on the surface, highly intimate and domestic, a story of mothers clashing. But "Orange" is always, damningly, about how institutions crush the illusion of the individual. In the season's final episodes, Sophia winds up in solitary, punished "for her own protection." You could tell her tragic story in many styles, bleak or arch, mythic or hyperrealist, and each of these approaches would be valuable, and provocative, in its own way. Authenticity is a useful goal, but it can take many forms. As anyone who has used Instagram knows, the no-filter option is also a filter. ♦

A CRITIC AT LARGE

THE TERRIBLE TEENS

What's wrong with them?

BY ELIZABETH KOLBERT



C_{57BL/6J} mice are black, with pink ears and long pink tails. Inbred for the purposes of experimentation, they exhibit a number of infelicitous traits, including a susceptibility to obesity, a taste for morphine, and a tendency to nibble off their cage mates' hair. They're also tipplers. Given access to ethanol, C_{57BL/6J} mice routinely suck away until the point that, were they to get behind the wheel of a Stuart Little-size roadster, they'd get pulled over for D.U.I.

Not long ago, a team of researchers at Temple University decided to take advantage of C_{57BL/6J}s' bad habits to test a hunch. They gathered eighty-six mice and placed them in Plexiglas cages,

either singly or in groups of three. Then they spiked the water with ethanol and videotaped the results.

Half of the test mice were four weeks old, which, in murine terms, qualifies them as adolescents. The other half were twelve-week-old adults. When the researchers watched the videos, they found that the youngsters had, on average, outdrunk their elders. More striking still was the pattern of consumption. Young male C_{57BL/6J}s who were alone drank roughly the same amount as adult males. But adolescent males with cage mates went on a bender; they spent, on average, twice as much time drinking as solo boy mice and about thirty per cent more time than solo girls.

In adolescence, the brain is wired to experience pleasure more intensely than before or after.

ILLUSTRATION BY ÉDITH CARRON

The researchers published the results in the journal *Developmental Science*. In their paper, they noted that it was "not possible" to conduct a similar study on human adolescents, owing to the obvious ethical concerns. But, of course, similar experiments are performed all the time, under far less controlled circumstances. Just ask any college dean. Or ask a teen-ager. I happen to have three adolescent sons and in this way recently learned about a supposedly fun pastime known as a "case race." Participants form teams of two and compete to see which pair can drink its way through a case of beer the fastest. (To get the most out of the experience, I was told, it's best to use a "thirty rack.")

Every adult has gone through adolescence, and studies have shown that if you ask people to look back on their lives they will disproportionately recall experiences they had between the ages of ten and twenty-five. (This phenomenon is called the "reminiscence bump.") And yet, to adults, the adolescent mind is a mystery—a Brigadoon-like place that's at once vivid and inaccessible. Why would anyone volunteer to down fifteen beers in a row? Under what circumstances could Edward Fortyhands, an activity that involves having two forty-ounce bottles of malt liquor affixed to your hands with duct tape, be construed as enjoyable? And what goes for drinking games also goes for hooking up with strangers, jumping from high places into shallow pools, and steering a car with your knees. At moments of extreme exasperation, parents may think that there's something wrong with their teen-agers' brains. Which, according to recent books on adolescence, there is.

Frances Jensen is a mother, an author, and a neurologist. In "The Teenage Brain: A Neuroscientist's Survival Guide to Raising Adolescents and Young Adults" (HarperCollins), written with Amy Ellis Nutt, she offers a parenting guide laced with the latest MRI studies. By her account, adolescents suffer from the cerebral equivalent of defective spark plugs.

"When we think of ourselves as civilized, intelligent adults, we really have the frontal and prefrontal parts of the

cortex to thank,” she writes. But “teens are not quite firing on all cylinders when it comes to the frontal lobes.” Thus, “we shouldn’t be surprised by the daily stories we hear and read about tragic mistakes.”

“The Teenage Brain” retails a number of such stories, including several involving Jensen’s sons, Andrew and Will. One is about Will’s totalling of the family’s Dodge. (He miscalculates the time he has to make a left turn.) Another features Andrew, his girlfriend, and another girl, who has passed out in the back of their car. The two conscious adolescents keep hoping the third one will wake up. Jensen insists that they take the girl to a nearby hospital. There her stomach gets pumped; it turns out that she has downed seventeen Jell-O shots—perhaps more, she can’t really remember. Then, there’s the story of Dan, “an all-around great kid,” who, one summer night, gets drunk and, together with a bunch of friends, scales the fence at the local tennis club to take a 3 A.M. swim. The friends get out, get dressed, and rescale the fence, only to discover that Dan is no longer with them. When they return to the pool, they find him lying face down in it. (Readers will be reassured to learn that Will and Andrew, at least, made it through high school in one piece and went on to graduate from Harvard and Wesleyan, respectively.)

The frontal lobes are the seat of what’s sometimes called the brain’s executive function. They’re responsible

for planning, for self-awareness, and for judgment. Optimally, they act as a check on impulses originating in other parts of the brain. But in the teen years, Jensen points out, the brain is still busy building links between its different regions. This process involves adding myelin around the axons, which conduct electrical impulses. (Myelin insulates the axons, allowing impulses to travel faster.) It turns out that the links are built starting in the back of the brain, and the frontal lobes are one of the last regions to get connected. They are not fully myelinated until people are in their twenties, or even thirties.

This is where parents step in. “You need to be your teens’ frontal lobes until their brains are fully wired,” Jensen writes. By this she seems to mean near-constant hectoring. Whenever she hears a story like the one about Dan, she rushes to tell Will and Andrew, and, whenever Will and Andrew screw up, she uses it as an opportunity to remind them that they, too, could wind up floating face down in a pool. (After the unconscious girl has been dropped off at the hospital, Jensen relates, she sits Andrew and his girlfriend down at the kitchen table and lectures them about “blood alcohol levels and the effects on coordination and consciousness.”) As a matter of principle, Jensen has attached a lock to the liquor cabinet in her own home. When her sons are invited to someone else’s house, she calls the kid’s parents to make sure there will be no unsupervised fun.

I feel compelled to confess that whenever I hear a grisly story involving a dead or maimed teen-ager, I, like Jensen, pass it on to my sons. However, I also feel I should point out that, in a book packed with charts and statistics, Jensen provides no empirical evidence that scare tactics work. From personal experience, I can say that the immediate response is not always encouraging. When I asked my sixteen-year-old twins how they’d react if I called their friends’ moms to enforce safe-party protocols, one of them said, “Why even have kids if you’re going to do that?”

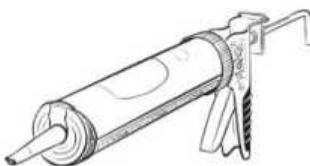
Laurence Steinberg is a professor of psychology at Temple, a father, and the lead researcher on the inebriated-mouse study. He is also the author of “Age of Opportunity: Lessons from the New Science of Adolescence” (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt). Like Jensen, he believes that teen-age brains are different from yours and mine. But, where Jensen identifies the problem as loosely connected frontal lobes, Steinberg sees it as an enlarged *nucleus accumbens*.

Consider the following scenario. One afternoon, you’re sitting in your office with wads of cotton stuck up your nose. (For the present purposes, it’s not important to know why.) Someone in your office has just baked a batch of chocolate-chip cookies. The aroma fills the air, but, since your nose is plugged, you don’t notice and continue working. Suddenly you sneeze, and the cotton gets dislodged. Now the smell hits, and you rush over to gobble up one cookie, then another.

According to Steinberg, adults spend their lives with wads of cotton in their metaphorical noses. Adolescents, by contrast, are designed to sniff out treats at a hundred paces. During childhood, the *nucleus accumbens*, which is sometimes called the “pleasure center,” grows. It reaches its maximum extent in the teen-age brain; then it starts to shrink. This enlargement of the pleasure center occurs in concert with other sensation-enhancing changes. As kids enter puberty, their brains sprout more dopamine receptors. Dopamine, a neurotransmitter, plays many roles in the human nervous system, the sexiest of which is signalling enjoyment.

“Nothing—whether it’s being with

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GREGORY

your friends, having sex, licking an ice-cream cone, zipping along in a convertible on a warm summer evening, hearing your favorite music—will ever feel as good as it did when you were a teenager,” Steinberg observes. And this, in turn, explains why adolescents do so many stupid things. It’s not that they are any worse than their elders at assessing danger. It’s just that the potential rewards seem—and, from a neurological standpoint, genuinely are—way, way greater. “The notion that adolescents take risks because they don’t know any better is ludicrous,” Steinberg writes.

Teen-agers are, as a rule, extremely healthy—healthier than younger children. But their death rate is much higher. The mortality rate for Americans between fifteen and nineteen years old is nearly twice what it is for those between the ages of one and four, and it’s more than three times as high as for those ages five to fourteen. The leading cause of death among adolescents today is accidents; this is known as the “accident hump.”

Steinberg explains the situation as the product of an evolutionary mismatch. To find mates, our primate ancestors had to venture outside their natal groups. The reward for taking chances in dangerous terrain was sex followed by reproduction, while the cost of sensibly staying at home was genetic oblivion. Adolescents in 2015 can find partners by swiping right on Tinder; nevertheless, they retain the neurophysiology of apes (and, to a certain extent, mice). Teen-agers are, in this sense, still swinging through the rain forest, even when they’re speeding along in a Tundra. They’re programmed to take crazy risks, so that’s what they do.

This is especially the case when teenagers get together. A teen driving with other teens in the car, for example, is four times as likely to crash as a teen driving alone. (The risk for adult drivers, by contrast, remains constant with passengers or without them.) This effect is often attributed to distraction or peer pressure; kids, the story goes, egg each other on, until, finally, they wind up in the E.R. But Steinberg, who has conducted all sorts of experiments on adolescents, both human and rodent, sees the problem as more fundamental. What

matters is the mere presence of peers, or really even just the idea of them.

In one experiment, Steinberg asked subjects to play a video game that simulated ordinary driving. He found that teens took more risks when their friends were around—by, for instance, running yellow lights—whether or not they could communicate with them. In another experiment, Steinberg told his subjects that their actions were being watched by other adolescents, in another room, when in fact the other room was empty. The results were the same. Mice, for their part, can’t taunt other mice or call them wusses; still, the presence of peers is enough to stimulate risky behavior. Brain-imaging studies show that being watched by friends activates teens’ reward centers; this, Steinberg theorizes, primes them to seek out still more rewards, which leads them to do things like duct-tape malt-liquor bottles to their hands. “In fact, the recklessness-enhancing effect of being around peers is strongest when adolescents actually know there is a high probability of something bad happening,” he writes.

My twins spent most of the month of August attending a driver’s-ed course at the local high school. We live in western Massachusetts, and state law requires kids to have thirty hours of classroom instruction before they take the road test, though if they are willing to wait until they turn eighteen they can skip the course. My twins are now old enough to have sex legally in Massachusetts, but across the border in New York the age of consent is seventeen. Here, I am happy to report, they cannot possess a handgun; up the road a couple of miles, in Vermont, a sixteen-year-old can. A year from now, my kids will, with my permission, be able to join the Army. But they still won’t be able to vote, or operate a forklift, or get a job at a sawmill, or buy a pack of cigarettes. It will be more than four years before they can sit down at a bar and order a beer.

The tangle of laws that apply to adolescents bespeaks a generalized confusion. Lawmakers can’t seem to decide whether they think teen-agers are under-informed or overly impulsive or just klutzy. A clearer account of



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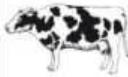
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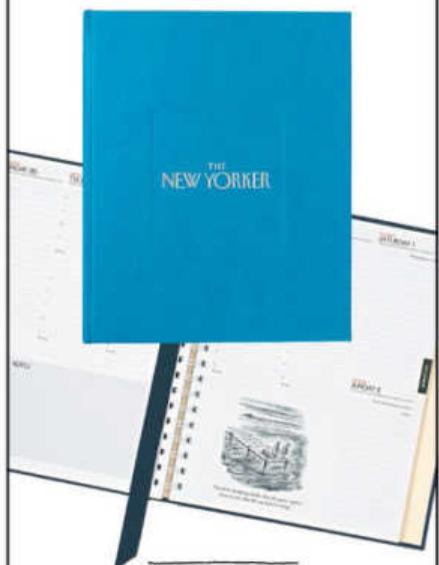
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"the teen-age brain" would have far-ranging policy implications, though not necessarily the sort that either teens or legislators would be happy about.

Take my kids' driver's-ed classes. From Steinberg's perspective, allowing sixteen-year-olds to get a license in return for sitting through lectures and doing some practice driving completely misses the point. Sixteen-year-olds are dangerous drivers. Their rate of fatal crashes per mile is three times as high as the rate for drivers age twenty and over, and nearly twice as high as the rate for drivers eighteen and nineteen. Sixteen-year-olds will still be a hazard after listening (or, more likely, not listening) to thirty hours' worth of cautionary tales. They actually do understand that driving is dangerous; the problem is that they're having too much fun to care. The only way to bring down their accident rate is to prevent them from getting behind the wheel.

"If we were genuinely concerned about improving adolescents' health, raising the driving age would be the single most important policy change we could make," Steinberg writes. He favors a minimum age of eighteen.

Much the same logic applies to drinking, smoking, and doing drugs. Each year, the U.S. spends hundreds of millions of dollars on public-service campaigns designed to alert adolescents to the perils of such dissipations. Hundreds of millions—perhaps billions—more are spent reiterating this message in high-school health classes. The results have been, to put it kindly, overwhelming. A 2006 study by the Government Accountability Office found that \$1.4 billion that the federal government had allocated to an anti-drug media campaign aimed at young people had had no perceptible impact. According to Steinberg, this sort of money would have been better spent on sports or arts programs that keep adolescents busy and under adult supervision.

Even violence looks different viewed through the lens of neurology. Crime rates rise steeply starting around age thirteen. They peak at age eighteen and then start to fall again. When the statistics are presented in the form of a graph, the result—the so-called age-crime curve—looks like the Matterhorn. This pattern has been noted for

more than a century (it was described back in 1904, by G. Stanley Hall, a psychologist who is sometimes credited with having "invented" adolescence), and it holds true not just in the U.S. but wherever crime figures are kept.

Both Steinberg and Jensen make the case that the violence hump, too, is a function of weak frontal lobes and oversensitive pleasure centers. And both argue against decades-long sentences for youthful offenders. Steinberg maintains an active side career as an expert witness for the defense; Jensen is a co-author on a brief submitted in a 2012 Supreme Court case involving two fourteen-year-olds who had been convicted of murder. In the brief, she and her colleagues asserted that "adolescent criminal conduct frequently results from experimentation with risky behavior and not from deep-seated moral deficiency reflective of 'bad' character." The Supreme Court ultimately ruled that states could not impose mandatory sentences of life without parole on defendants under eighteen, though courts could impose such sentences on convicted murderers if they chose to.

Many recent innovations—cars, Ecstasy, iPhones, S.U.V.s, thirty racks, semi-automatic weapons—exacerbate the mismatch between teen-agers' brains and their environment. Adolescents today face temptations that teens of earlier eras, not to mention primates or rodents, couldn't have dreamed of. In a sense, they live in a world in which all the water bottles are spiked. And so, as Jensen and Steinberg observe, they run into trouble time and time again.

But perhaps, it occurred to me the other day after one of my twins nearly plowed into a mailbox, to look at the problem this way is to peer through the wrong end of the MRI machine. Yes, adolescents in the twenty-first century pose a great risk to others and, statistically speaking, an even greater risk to themselves. But this is largely because other terrifying risks—scarlet fever, diphtheria, starvation, smallpox, plague—have receded. Adolescence evolved over a vast expanse of time when survival at any age was a crapshoot. If the hazards are new, so, too, is the safety. Which is why I will keep telling my kids scary stories and why they will continue to ignore them. ♦

FORM AND FUNCTION

New poems by Linda Gregerson and James Tate.

BY DAN CHIASSON



The world you have to live in is//the world that you have made," writes the American poet Linda Gregerson, whose dauntless, serrated work is collected in "Prodigal: New and Selected Poems, 1976–2014" (Mariner). Gregerson's poems examine worldly wonder and danger in a single bifocal view. She writes an authentic American georgic, focussed not on Virgilian oxen or olives but on the processes by which, say, cancer cells metastasize or endangered cranes find patches of endangered maize. These operations are terrifying; once catalyzed by human folly, they are mindless, unstoppable, and morally neutral.

But Gregerson is a poet of praise: her poems constantly renegotiate the terms of human happiness and safety in light of randomized peril. "The fault's in nature," she writes, "who will // without system or

explanation/ make permanent / havoc of little mistakes." Her great subject is coincidence, both its cruelties and its windfalls; though the poems seem unusually exposed to the "havoc" they describe, their brilliance marking them for calamity, they nevertheless delight in chance and seize its unbidden opportunities.

Gregerson, a professor of English at the University of Michigan, is a scholar of the Renaissance and was once a professional actor. She learned from Shakespeare and Thomas Wyatt, among others, what she has called "open voicing," the probationary "lapses and interruption" that make those five-hundred-year-old voices seem so vulnerable and real. The mind in her poems operates without a map, generating itself as it goes along. I prize in Gregerson a natural drift and shamble, but what sutures everything to-

Gregerson invented for herself a helix-like stanza, a shape she says "saved my life."

PHOTOGRAPH BY MARK PECKMEZIAN

gether is her syntax, gathered in part from the Elizabethans but as sinewy and precise as any in contemporary writing. "I think of grammar as a social contract," she has said; without it, relations of all kinds cannot be expressed. This is the jumbled world of text messages, or of concordances, where, to quote Elizabeth Bishop, everything is "only connected by 'and' and 'and.'" Here is the opening of "Salt":

Because she had been told, time and again,
not to swing on the neighbors' high hammock,
and because she had time and again gone back, lured
by the older boys and their dangerous propulsions, because a child in shock (we didn't know
this yet) can seem sullen or intransigent, and because my father hated his life,
my sister
with her collarbone broken was spanked
and sent to bed for the night, to shiver through the August heat and cry her way through sleep.

The controlled detonations of those serial "because"s mark the postulates of the child's life, her father's self-hatred just another adverse environmental given. A single sentence builds through its multiple modifying clauses, across lines and stanzas that seem here to flinch from anticipated punishment, toward the final, painful disclosure.

Gregerson's syntax acts as a strong forward current, carving a jagged path through the stony resistance of her lines and stanzas. Her best-known poems are written in the form of "Salt": a three-line helix-like stanza with a corseted middle line, a shape that she invented and which Gregerson, not given to hyperbole, says "saved my life." Her first book, "Fire in the Conservatory," had intellectual force without that generative formal opposition. Her breakthrough came with her next book, "The Woman Who Died in Her Sleep," whose opening poem, "The Bad Physician," immediately flexes the new form. "Even in error the body/wields cunning," Gregerson writes:

The child who swallows the amnion now
will swallow milk
by winter. The milk
can find a use for me but not
for my belief,
nor yours, and it beggars the best
of our purposes.

The poem describes a sick child whose illness progresses by alternately lurching and idling, a pattern suggested

by these spasmodic enjambments. A bit later, in an extraordinary passage, the child's "muddied / gait" finds its harrowing formal coordinates:

My friend's young daughter moved
with a slightly muddled
gait,
and then her tongue
and then her hands
unlearned
their freedom, so newly
acquired. Unlearned with great
labor
while the tumor thrived,
and all the elixirs in Mexico
could not
revise her sentence by a day.

"All the elixirs in Mexico" recalls Humpty Dumpty, a story that feeds children's delight in comic accident and mishap; "revise her sentence," with its pun, admits that Gregerson's own written "sentence" makes not a bit of difference to the girl or to her parents, who suffer under their own shattering sentence. The next time someone asks me what advantage poetry holds over prose, I will point to these lines, which move beyond the description of pain to its tangible embodiment.

An art that brings this kind of finish to poems about pain risks inoculating itself against its subjects. But Gregerson's poems, with their frequent pauses and hesitations, imply a present listener whose silent cues the poems incorporate. They invite interruption, or, interrupting themselves, they seem to preempt someone else's barging in. They are occasionally tipped into disequilibrium by rough, intercalated challenges to their authority, especially by children, whose innocence they idolize but also fear. In "Song of Myself," Whitman's entire rhetorical system grinds to a halt after a child asks him, simply, "*What is the grass?*" In "Bunting," Gregerson's young daughter sees some horrific news footage of Kurdish children dead after a chemical attack:

"They're sleeping," said Emma, "they're very tired,"
as the footage came on again,
child after child in the chalk
embrace
of chemical death. We saw again
the elegant economy with which God
sculpts
the infant face. Not one
not cast in heaven's mold.

Both mother and child here are testing the utility of metaphors. "They're sleeping" is what children say when they know someone is dead; "chalk / embrace," "elegant economy," "God," "heaven": these are all, in one way or another, adaptations of brute reality to the consolations of poetic language. It's all too much to take in, but a poem at least doesn't supplant "the children on the screen" with a commercial that "lures" Emma "to want / with the whole heart of childhood what / money / will buy."

The adjacency of fortune and misfortune, the coin toss that decides who lives and who dies, who wins and who loses: these subjects require not just eloquence and feeling but an analysis of the whole social order that in other hands would seem incompatible with lyric compression and intensity. The fact that I am writing these sentences and you are reading them means that for us, compared with a large swath of humanity, the coin toss is rigged to go our way most of the time. The worst response to this realization would be to write a poetry of self-indulgent guilt, itself a product of the luxury it condemns. Weirdly, this is where Gregerson's scholarship sets her apart. Her poems hack their verbal energy from deep sources in Renaissance poetry and its classical models. Indignation, joy, weariness, sweetness: human beings have felt these emotions before, and their prior expressions well up gorgeously in Gregeron's most impressive passages:

Jason had the misfortune to suffer misfortune
the third
of July. July's the month of hospital ro-
tations; on holiday weekends the venerable
stay home.

So when Jason lay blue and inert on the table
and couldn't be made to breathe for three and a
quarter hours,
the staff were too green to let him go.
The household gods have abandoned us to the
gods
of juris-
prudence and suburban sprawl.

The repetitions of "misfortune" and "misfortune," "July" and "July," recall the interlocking syntax of Virgil's Latin and of Milton's approximation of it. We live in a world still haunted by the old superstitions, and even though clear lines of fault can be tracked, we attribute a tragedy like Jason's to bad luck. Gregeron's

sly employment of an old-fashioned word like "venerable" to refer to A-list doctors, away for the holiday, suggests the ecclesiastical prestige that physicians—some of whom are said to work miracles—still command. This language preserves intact many vestiges of the cultural past. The new gods of "hospital ro-tations" and "juris-/prudence" turn out to be just as fickle or vindictive as the old.

In "The Woman Who Died in Her Sleep," as in the best poems from her subsequent volumes and the fine new poems collected here, Gregerson attains what few contemporary poets even seek: a plausible "we," a basis for speaking across the lines of individual circumstance and social identity. She knows that she is not credentialled to speak for the entire human race, but her vision of justice is clear, her sadness palpable; she hates what happens when people fall outside our reach. In "Font," a new poem, the news on her home screen of China's "Baby 59"—who was rescued after being found in a sewage pipe—reminds Gregerson of the world of vulnerability beyond the circle of anyone's control. Every poet of moral breadth becomes, in time, a lamenter of her own limitations. We're all trapped inside the pinpoint circumference of human will and power.

When I was reading Gregerson earlier this summer, word arrived that James Tate had died at the age of seventy-one. Tate was among the strangest and most influential American poets of the past fifty years, his career somewhat warped by significant early fame: he won the Yale Younger Poets prize, in 1967, for "The Lost Pilot," one of the great débüt volumes in recent memory, and a Pulitzer in 1992. He regarded this esteem, like everything else, with curiosity and amusement. If Gregeron's empathy rides the long sight lines of American life, as Whitman's did, her nomadic imagination resting wherever it pleases, Tate, who lived in Amherst, Massachusetts, for most of his adult life, was—forgive me—quietly gregarious in the spirit of Emily Dickinson, awake to the crabbed beauty of his perceptions. His last book is "Dome of the Hidden Pavilion" (Ecco), a title that my nine-year-old son would give to a sci-fi story that he wrote in camp. That's the point,

with Tate: the obstinate refusal, itself childlike, to relinquish a child's naïveté.

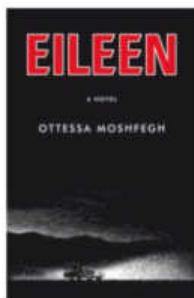
Like many children and eccentrics, Tate can remind us how hard it is to share in another person's inner universe; we have one of our own that is already often boring enough. But the poems in "Dome of the Hidden Pavilion" are quite moving, partly because, in their oblique way, they face illness and impending death. In "The Psychiatric Unit," Tate suggests we're all in one, all the time; in "Cement," the human predicament is redrawn slightly, its speaker a man condemned, like a soul in Tartarus, to carry "hundred-pound sacks of cement all day." Tate is fundamentally a poet of embarrassment, ever showing up in the wrong outfit or on the wrong day. The poems track the absurdist accommodations made by their protagonists to reality and logic, but we never quite get the knack for how life is played, and then the game ends.

The book is filled with echoes of his Amherst neighbor. Dickinson's famous poem "I heard a Fly buzz—when I died" is the iconic American poem of posthumous recollection. The "I" recollecting dwells in the imagination, which seems infinite; it looks upon its body as a sour piece of flesh with its own pitiable destiny. "Dome of the Hidden Pavilion" ends with "Plastic Story," a reinvention of Dickinson's poem:

I had barely said my prayers when I felt a large insect crawl over my face. I was afraid to move. When I opened my eyes I saw it was a piece of plastic that had torn loose from a project I was working on in the next room. But what had torn it loose?

The piece of plastic is mysteriously self-propelled ("There's no wind in the house. A piece of plastic can't/fly on its own"); in the course of the poem, the plastic turns sinister and strangles Tate. Dickinson's poem is, in part, a boast: the imagination is so powerful that it can imagine its own end. Tate's ironic version stages his murder at the hands of an unimportant detail—a typical detail from a Tate poem, whose work is filled with such effluvia. The plastic thing kills him, but only within the poem that he created. Which one wins: James Tate, or his homicidal piece of plastic? ♦

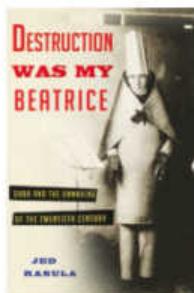
BRIEFLY NOTED



EILEEN, by Ottessa Moshfegh (*Penguin Press*). "I hated almost everything," Eileen Dunlop says at the start of this determinedly macabre début novel. The year she is brooding on is 1964, when she was twenty-four, living with her drunk of a father in a derelict New England house and working at a prison for boys. The plot centers on the arrival of a psychologist who bewitches Eileen into escaping her pitiful life by means of crime, but its real subject is Eileen's obsessive revulsion toward her lustful, virginal younger self. Moshfegh dwells on the body and its functions to a gratuitous degree (laxatives and vermouth are Eileen's substances of choice), but there is a punkish radicalism to her depiction of a mousy young woman as a perverse grotesque.



INFINITE HOME, by Kathleen Alcott (*Riverhead*). A tenant in the Brooklyn brownstone at the heart of this captivating novel notes "the slow turn and aim" of the elderly landlady's eyes. An attempt by the landlady's estranged son to take over the building sets in motion events that reveal the complexity of the lives of the various residents. An artist champions a fellow-tenant who quietly writes songs for each object in her apartment—"as though in defense of some weaker life form." A standup comedian is fascinated by another tenant, Paulie, who, despite a developmental disorder, "chased and cornered happiness daily." He films Paulie, then compulsively edits the film, seeking—like Alcott's novel—to "trim a life down to its brightest core."



DESTRUCTION WAS MY BEATRICE, by Jed Rasula (*Basic*). As this entertaining history of Dada demonstrates, determining just what the movement consisted of was a key concern from the beginning. One founding Dadaist wrote that the seminal Cabaret Voltaire performances of 1916 expressed "at least this one thing: that this humiliating age has not succeeded in winning our respect." Rasula shows Dada's spread from Switzerland to Berlin, Paris, and New York, and highlights its successes and provocations—from Francis Picabia's drawings of "antimechanical machines" to the repeated, fictitious assertion that Charlie Chaplin had joined the movement. He also provides sharp biographical portraits of many artists, including Kurt Schwitters, who, fittingly, carried "the Dada spirit further than anyone, even if under the rubric of anti-Dada."

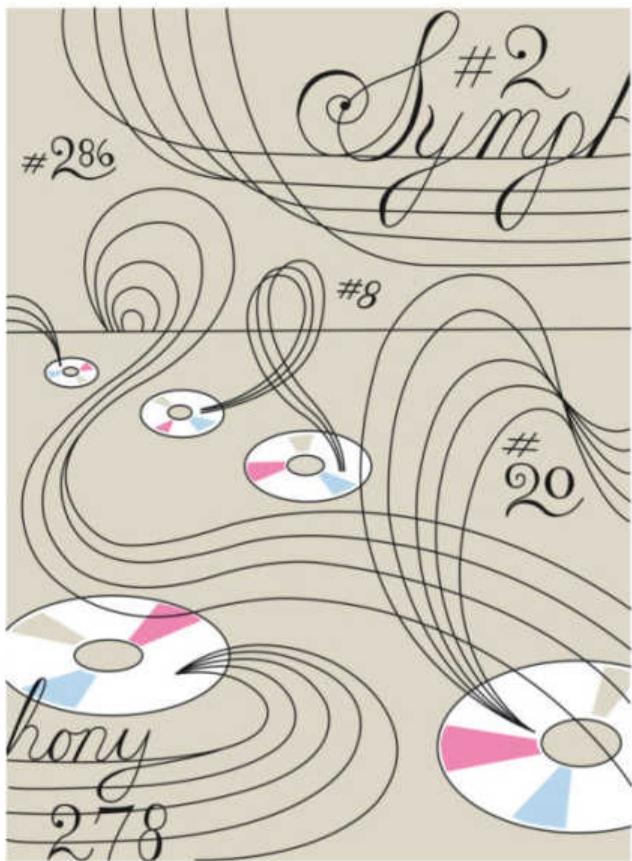


LEAVING ORBIT, by Margaret Lazarus Dean (*Graywolf*). A meditation on America's waning age of manned spaceflight, this book is also about the craft of writing. Its heroes are not only the astronauts who manned the momentous NASA missions of the sixties but also the writers who witnessed them. After the crash of the space shuttle Columbia, in 2003, the NASA space program wound down, with three final launches in 2011. Dean attends all three. She meets NASA engineers who are soon to lose their jobs and hotel owners welcoming their last space tourists. Space travel, she reflects, is "exploratory, scientific, ennobling, and expensive."

THE SYMPHONY, UNFINISHED

A venerable form survives the twentieth century.

BY ALEX ROSS



In 1849, Richard Wagner declared, with his usual assurance, that “the last symphony has already been written.” Beethoven’s Ninth, with its eruption of voices in the finale, had, in Wagner’s view, exhausted the form and inaugurated a new age of music drama. The pronouncement went unheeded. In the decades that followed, Brahms wrote four symphonies, Tchaikovsky six, Dvořák nine. After 1900, the idea that nine symphonies represented an outer limit—“He who wants to go beyond it must die,” Schoenberg said, speaking of Mahler’s unfinished Tenth—fell away. Shostakovich produced fifteen symphonies, Havergal Brian thirty-two, Alan Hovhaness sixty-seven. As of this writing, the Finnish conductor Leif Segerstam has generated

two hundred and eighty-six (having passed Papa Haydn more than a decade ago, with his Symphony No. 105, “Pa-Pá, Pá-Pá-Passing . . . ”). Composers have also exceeded the seventy or eighty minutes’ duration that was long considered the maximum. Brian’s “Gothic” Symphony lasts almost two hours; Kaikhosru Sorabji’s “Jami” Symphony, which has yet to be performed, would go on for four and a half hours; Dimitrie Cucliu’s Twelfth, also patiently awaiting its première, might devour six.

All this manic productivity notwithstanding, the symphony entered its twilight phase in the years just before the First World War. The modernist revolution launched by Debussy, Schoenberg, Stravinsky, and Bartók took place outside

Many modern symphonies can be encountered only on recordings.

symphonic bounds. With the death of Mahler, in 1911, the symphony seemed to lose the world-shaping power that Beethoven had bestowed on it. To devote oneself to the form was to risk being called a conservative, a nostalgist, a manufacturer of bourgeois museum pieces; twentieth-century symphonies tended to be tonal in orientation and spacious in design, the musical equivalent of landscape painting. When progressive-minded composers took up the symphony, they often did so with ironic detachment. Alfred Schnittke’s First includes mangled citations of Chopin and Tchaikovsky, and Luciano Berio’s Sinfonia makes a surreal collage out of Mahler’s “Resurrection.” More recently, the German-British composer Michael Wolters produced an absurdist piece called “Spring Symphony: The Joy of Life,” which lasts sixteen seconds.

Yet twilight has its satisfactions. In the slow summer months, I’ve been listening obsessively to symphonies on CD, giving particular attention to the twentieth-century aftermath. My stereo has been brooding over the likes of Andrzej Panufnik, Edmund Rubbra, and Eduard Tubin, as well as more familiar fare by Shostakovich, Sibelius, and Nielsen. The question of conservatism is a complicated one. Scholars now routinely ascribe modernist complexities to ostensibly old-fashioned late-Romantic repertory; they are often right, though the category of “modernist” can become meaningless in the process. If Rachmaninoff is modern, who isn’t? The appeal of the form may lie elsewhere, in a skeptical nostalgia that opposes the darker side of modernity.

Of the post-Mahler cycles, the one that has come closest to joining the mainstream repertory is Shostakovich’s. His early symphonies, written under the influence of radical Bolshevik aesthetics, approach the traditional Beethovenian model in quizzical, even sardonic fashion; the Fifth, written at the time of Stalin’s Terror, takes that model in apparent earnest; later works, especially the Ninth, Fourteenth, and Fifteenth, deconstruct it again. The Tenth, which Andris Nelsons recorded earlier this year with the Boston Symphony (Deutsche Grammophon), lies somewhere in between the extremes; its first movement is grim and monumental, but the circus-like finale veers toward a

mode that might be called triumphant-grotesque. Nelsons's recording is the first in a series titled "Shostakovich Under Stalin's Shadow"; fortunately, he does not labor to wring portentous messages from the score, instead finding a steady pulse of emotion amid the machine rhythms and ironclad climaxes. As often with Nelsons, the phrasing has a vocal shape, and the Bostonians respond avidly.

Nielsen and Sibelius, dissimilar twins of Nordic symphonism (both were born in 1865), have been much recorded of late, on account of sesquicentennial celebrations. Nielsen's set of six, hyperkinetic and animally alive, are well served by two sharply articulated surveys, one by Sakari Oramo and the Royal Stockholm Philharmonic (BIS), and the other by Alan Gilbert and the New York Philharmonic (Dacapo). Oramo is lithe and precise; Gilbert is more in tune with Nielsen's furies, especially in his recording of the Fifth Symphony. Sibelius's seven, the *ne plus ultra* of symphonic rumination, have benefitted less from the anniversary attention. In the nineties, Osmo Vänskä and the Lahti Symphony recorded a cycle for BIS that, by burrowing into the darkest corners of Sibelius's world, outclassed all modern rivals. Vänskä is now revisiting the symphonies with the Minnesota Orchestra (again for BIS), but he has yet to match his earlier intensity. A new cycle by John Storgårds and the BBC Philharmonic (Chandos) is altogether too efficient, although Sibelius fanatics will want to explore three recently discovered late-period fragments that are tacked on to the set; cryptic and playful, they hint at the style of the mythic Eighth Symphony, whose manuscript the composer evidently burned in a fit of self-doubt.

Sibelius forever changed the psychology of the symphony, imposing a more introverted, anti-heroic narrative. Few of his countless imitators can match his command of structure, which holds fast even when, as in the Fourth, he is exploring states of extreme psychological unease. If you acquire a taste for twentieth-century symphonies, you become a connoisseur of extraordinary moments that may not add up to a successful whole. Rubbra's Fourth Symphony, a pastoral British work from 1942, has one of the most magical beginnings in the literature: over gently pulsing dominant sevenths in the winds

and horns, strings sustain a simple, triadic motif that bends down like the wings of a wide-spanned bird in flight. Nothing else in the piece is at that level, but I listen to it at least once a year. Tubin's Fifth Symphony (1946), a metaphor for Estonia's struggle against Soviet domination, has a stupendous coda: a double formation of timpani, reminiscent of an electrifying passage in Nielsen's Fourth, propels a seven-note ostinato from near-silence to declamatory thunder, with the brass clamoring above the drums at the end. The preceding music is less remarkable, but I'm content to wait.

Then there are undervalued craftsmen like William Schuman, whose bitterly beautiful Eighth Symphony deserves to be heard as often as anything by his contemporary Copland; or Bohuslav Martinů, whose Third Symphony, from 1944, matches the urgency of Shostakovich's wartime utterances while avoiding their longueurs; or Panufnik, a greatly gifted Pole who, during the Communist period, took refuge in Britain and struggled to win international renown. The conductor Łukasz Borowicz recently completed an impressive survey of Panufnik's ten symphonies for the German label CPO, with the Polish Radio Symphony and the Konzerthaus Orchestra Berlin. These works deploy a set of devices that, when you listen in sequence, can seem repetitive: spells of immobile melancholy alternate with propulsive, percussive episodes. Yet each symphony is so impeccably constructed, seldom exceeding the half-hour mark, that you don't mind the sense of *déjà vu*. Borowicz's disk of the Second, Third, and Tenth shows Panufnik whittling his method to a refined extreme. Listeners are likely to return most often to the Third, or "Sinfonia Sacra," in which Panufnik applies his habitual terseness, his obsessive concentration on small strands of material, to a heart-tugging subject: the old Polish religious hymn "Bogurodzica," or "Mother of God." When the full melody rises majestically out of the orchestra at the end, the effect is not merely sentimental; it feels like the proof of a theorem.

In the twenty-first century, the influx of symphonies has slowed, yet a far-flung assortment of composers, ranging from the onetime downtown outsider Philip Glass to the onetime

European enfant terrible Krzysztof Penderecki, remain wedded to it. The Wisconsin-born, Munich-based composer Gloria Coates has written sixteen symphonies to date, many of them available on Naxos and CPO. Coates augments the customary landscape painting with an array of avant-garde techniques, notably the liquid glissando textures pioneered by Iannis Xenakis. Ghosts haunt the scene: the Fourth Symphony quotes "When I am laid in earth," from Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas," and the Fifteenth cites Mozart's "Ave Verum Corpus," both in a dreamlike blur. All of this is far removed from the old Romantic heroics. "I have to go into the deeper part of myself to make it a symphony," Coates once said, in a conversation with the critic-composer Kyle Gann. "I have to have big spaces of time and quiet."

A genre once aimed at vast crowds—Mahler imagined his symphonies being played in stadiums, for tens of thousands of people—now leads a more subdued, solitary existence. Much of its legacy is ignored in concert halls and can be encountered only on recordings. Consider, finally, the case of the British composer Robert Simpson (1921–1997), whose eleven symphonies, tensely wound in the Nielsen vein, are very seldom played. I got to know them through a complete cycle on the Hyperion label (a project partly funded by Phil Lesh, the erudite bassist of the Grateful Dead), but I have yet to hear a note of Simpson live. Aware of the cultural shift in listening, Simpson wrote his Seventh Symphony directly for the recorded medium. The audience, he said, would be "one man sitting in a chair, by himself." The work begins with a muscular, determined statement in the bass regions of the orchestra and ends with a drawn-out, eerily expressionless C-sharp in the strings, marked mezzo-piano. Some listeners wondered whether Simpson was portraying nuclear annihilation or some other apocalyptic event. He answered, "The end is C-sharp," but added that it could be "a picture of people not facing a fact that stares them in the face." Such is the sophistication that an allegedly outdated form can achieve: we listen to a dire sound that no one else can hear. ♦

MOM'S HOME

The mysteries of "Whistler's Mother."

BY PETER SCHJELDAHL

*A detail of Whistler's iconic portrait. The sentimental responses to it exasperated him.*

A couple of weeks ago, I visited two mothers in Massachusetts. One was my own, Charlene, who lives in a retirement home in Lenox. The other was the black-clad lady portrayed in “Whistler’s Mother”—the popular name of the masterpiece that James Abbott McNeill Whistler painted in 1871 and titled “Arrangement in Grey and Black, No. 1.” Anna Matilda McNeill Whistler, who lived with her son, in London, from 1864 to 1875, sits in profile with an air of infinite patience, gazing steadily at, apparently, nothing. The work is on loan to the Clark Art Institute, in Williamstown, from the Musée d’Orsay, in Paris. In 1891, it became the first American art work

ever bought by the French state, and it remains the most important American work residing outside the United States.

The painting represents the peak of Whistler’s radical method of modulating tones of single colors. The paint looks soft, almost fuzzy—as if it were exhaled onto the surface. There is some bravura brushwork, where Anna’s lace-cuffed hands clutch a handkerchief, with unprimed canvas peeking through, and daubed hints of Japanese-style floral patterning on a curtain that commands the left side of the picture. A few of the daubs faintly echo the pink of Anna’s flesh. She wears a gold wedding ring: a spark of harmony with the

muted gilding of the frame that Whistler designed for the picture. Practically subliminal whispers of reds and blues underlie areas of the silver-gray wall behind her, and a dark purple smolders in the curtain, where the artist’s signature emblem—a butterfly—hovers.

The chromatic subtleties contribute to an unsettled feeling. A more substantial jolt occurs when you register an over-all spatial distortion: the forms stretch horizontally, so that the length of Anna’s concealed legs, angled and descending to an upholstered footstool, suggests the anatomy of an N.B.A. draft pick. The more you notice of the composition’s economies—such as the cavalier indication of the bentwood chair legs, at the lower right, and, at the lower left, three perfunctory diagonal strokes that do for establishing the plane of the floor—the more happily manipulated you may feel, in ways that, like the camera tricks of a great movie director, excite a sense of the scene as truer to life than truth itself. It took me an hour of inspection to take in an inconspicuous, brownish strip across the bottom of the canvas. Anna’s dress falls smoothly past it and out of the picture. It is the edge of a stage or a platform. Whistler is looking up at his mom.

“Yes, one does like to make one’s mummy just as nice as possible,” Whistler allowed years later, answering friends who praised the speaking likeness of the portrayal. But he was exasperated by sentimental responses to the work. He regularly preached that subject matter should be regarded merely as a pretext for adventures in aestheticism. He said, “To me it is interesting as a picture of my mother; but what can or ought the public to care about the identity of the portrait?” Was he kidding? (He was sly.) Of course we care, if not to the extent of a civic group in Ashland, Pennsylvania, which in 1938 erected a monumental statue of the seated Anna, on a base inscribed with words from Coleridge: “A mother is the holiest thing alive.” At any rate, the answer to Whistler’s question touches on what many have noted is iconic about history’s short list of artistic icons. The “Mona Lisa,” “The Scream,” “American Gothic,” and the best of Andy Warhol’s

"Marilyn's all share with the Whistler the distillation of a meaning instantly recognized and forever inexhaustible. In this case, it's the mysteries of motherhood. Everybody has a mother, and something close to half of everybody becomes one.

I'm the oldest of Charlene's five kids with our late father, Gilmore, an inventor and entrepreneur. When I walked into her building, she was at the piano accompanying a sing-along that concluded with a briskly rendered "Yellow Rose of Texas." Charlene is ninety-eight, but her memory is sharp, and I had hoped that it would yield associations with Whistler's portrait. Her father was a postmaster in a North Dakota prairie town. Could she recall the 1934 stamp that reproduced the image with the words "In Memory and in Honor of the Mothers of America"? No, she said, "It was a fourth-class post office, the smallest. I don't think we got the fancy commemoratives." She was never much for art, she reminded me. But, having thought about the painting, she e-mailed me later that it put her in mind of her own mother, who "was born in 1875 and continued to wear rather long dresses and never cut her hair. Her opinions were a reflection of the Victorian age." Charlene was amused to learn that, when the portrait was made, Anna Whistler was sixty-seven: "So young!"

Anna, born in Wilmington, North Carolina, was a daughter of the antebellum South; she was the niece of a slave owner, and, through him, the cousin of a reported nine mixed-race children. She married George Washington Whistler,

a West Point graduate and a brilliant civil engineer, and they had five sons, only two of whom, James and William, survived to adulthood. She was described by a sister-in-law as "so *unshakeable* that sometimes I could shake her." Beginning in 1842, the family spent six years in St. Petersburg, Russia, where George served Tsar Nicholas I as the chief engineer of a rail line to Moscow, and the artistically precocious James, at age eleven, enrolled in the Imperial Academy of Fine Arts. In 1849, George died, after a bout of cholera, and the family returned to America.

James followed his father's example and his own military fantasies by entering West Point. But he proved a feckless cadet—the superintendent, Robert E. Lee, liked but despaired of him—and he flunked out in his third year. He evinced no better discipline in government jobs as a geographical draftsman. Then, in 1855, Whistler went to Paris and launched himself as an artist, a dandy, and a lover of women. He knew Courbet, Baudelaire, Manet, Monet, and Degas, and closely befriended Henri Fantin-Latour. Whistler's first touchstone painting, "Symphony in White, No. 1: The White Girl" (1862), was a sensation in the epoch-making 1863 Salon des Refusés (though it was eclipsed by Manet's "Le Déjeuner sur l'Herbe"). He was never less than esteemed in France, notably by poets and writers. (The young Proust kept as a talisman a pair of gray gloves that Whistler had worn.) It seems a pity that he took his act to London, by stages beginning in 1859, and refined his genius in the pokier precincts of

British art, meanwhile lavishing rather too much of it on flamboyant combats of wit, artistic doctrine, and personal grudge with artists, critics, and patrons who, Oscar Wilde excepted, were little worth the candle. (At first a devoted fan, Wilde came to complain that Whistler spelled art "with a capital 'I.'")

Polarizing opinion in the London art world, Whistler pioneered the modern trope of the artist as scandalous celebrity. But he tempered his raffish ways with stratagems of genteel respectability, which his mother's presence supported. When Anna moved in with him—her other son, William, was serving as a doctor in the Confederate Army—the artist moved his current mistress out to other quarters. He wrote to Fantin-Latour, "I had to empty my house and purify it from cellar to eaves." The religiously pious Anna sighed at what she viewed as her son's flaws, but she graciously hosted his friends and became positively fond of one of them, the decadent's decadent, Algernon Swinburne.

Whistler's painting of his mother overcame fierce resistance to appear in the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy of Arts, in 1872. It is unique among his portraits. Every other teases out a nuance of personality in the sitter—the works are often seductive, but never conventionally so in the way of portraits by his follower John Singer Sargent. In "Whistler's Mother," Anna's blank forbearance speaks of capitulation. She will do anything for him. She is his. Such exclusive devotion is the primal dream of every mother's son, isn't it? ♦

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CARTOON CAPTION CONTEST

Each week, we provide a cartoon in need of a caption. You, the reader, submit a caption, we choose three finalists, and you vote for your favorite. Caption submissions for this week's cartoon, by Michael Crawford, must be received by Sunday, August 30th. The finalists in the August 10th & 17th contest appear below. We will announce the winner, and the finalists in this week's contest, in the September 14th issue. The winner receives a signed print of the cartoon. Any resident of the United States, Canada (except Quebec), Australia, the United Kingdom, or the Republic of Ireland age eighteen or over can enter or vote. To do so, and to read the complete rules, visit contest.newyorker.com.

THE WINNING CAPTION



*"When did you first realize you
were really a woman?"*

Shelly Goldstein, Santa Monica, Calif.

THE FINALISTS

"I didn't mean your day wasn't hard, too."
Bev Beer, Princeton, N.J.

"That's funny, I don't feel like the winner."
Ray Steib, Metairie, La.

"I just do it for the health care."
Josh Sachs, New York City

THIS WEEK'S CONTEST



"

"

**ALFIE BOE
BRINGS IT HOME
TO BROADWAY**



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Les Misérables

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